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MONAGAS AND PAEZ:

BEING

A BRIEF VIEW OF THE LATE EVENTS

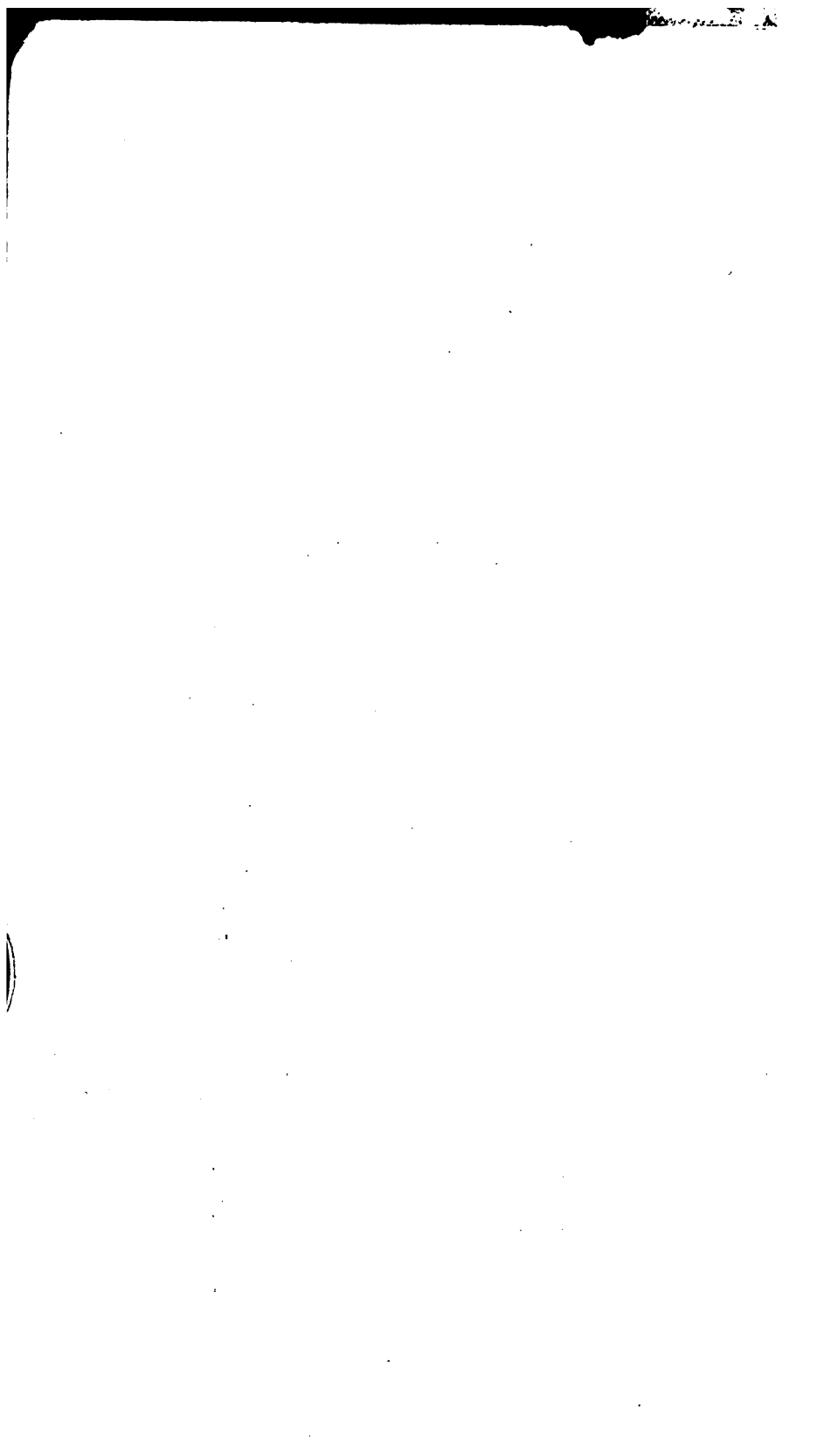
IN

VENEZUELA.

NEW YORK:

PRINTED BY S. W. BENEDICT, 16 SPRUCE STREET.

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MONAGAS AND PAEZ.

For the last three years the press of the United States has been teeming with articles, emanating from a party in Venezuela which had been long accustomed to monopolize to itself all the first offices of a country, that it had ruled over solely with a view to its own selfish interests : this party, we say, on finding the reins of government falling from its grasp, made the most strenuous efforts to recover its lost power, and both in Venezuela and in the United States have used every means to vilify those who had overthrown them. The facts are simply these. From the period that Venezuela separated from Colombia, Paez has been the virtual President of the country. He was twice elected to that high office, and the other persons nominally raised to that dignity were entirely subject to his influence, or, as in the case of Dr. Vargas, were obliged to withdraw from it. It was, therefore, Paez who, for seventeen years, actually governed the country. At the election of 1847 he gave his support to the nomination of General Monagas, in the expectation that he would prove as submissive to his domination as other Presidents had been, but he was fearfully mistaken. General Monagas was well disposed towards the party who had elevated him to power, but their pretensions were so exaggerated, the policy they required him to adopt was so unconstitutional, the measures they insisted upon were so sanguinary, that he resolved to free himself from the shackles they attempted to impose upon him and govern for himself. Paez, on finding that Monagas was not the puppet he had expected—

and that he could no longer pull the wires as he had so long done, was determined to rid himself of so unexpected an obstacle to his views, and raised the standard of rebellion. The result of this has been seen. Paez has been sentenced by the Congress of his country to perpetual exile. The people of New York, misled by the pretended facts and arguments they had so constantly read in a few journals of this city, looked upon him as a martyr to his patriotism, and received him with open arms. The Paez party had styled themselves Constitutionalists, when every act of theirs was an attack upon the constitution they had sworn to defend; but the people of the United States having heard only one side of the question believed these unfounded assertions. Within the last few months a portion of the press of the United States, having obtained more positive information with regard to these matters, has placed it fairly before the public, and has produced some change in public opinion. It is for the purpose of entirely dispelling the mist of error which has so sedulously been raised, that we present a review of the occurrences which compelled Venezuela to banish from her soil one of her leading men. The act was necessary for her own tranquillity and the security of her institutions, which were threatened with destruction by the inordinate ambition and self-will of one who ought to have been the foremost to sustain her freedom and defend the Law. The greater part of the following pages have been extracted from the work of a Venezuelan, who was, for many years, the friend and adherent of General Paez, one who has long been intimately connected with the administration of the Republic, having held some of the highest offices in the State, and who was consequently in a position to obtain more accurate information on the events in question than almost any other person. The work is entitled "*Apuntes para la Historia,*" or "*Notes for History, on the Conspiracy of Paez against the Institutions of his Country.*"

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We also present sketches, drawn by the same hand, of the character of Monagas and Paez, that all their antecedents may be fully understood in this country, and because they answer satisfactorily many of the charges brought by the latter against the former, in his letter to the Tribune of the 23d October. We might have much enlarged upon the subject with regard to Paez, by bringing forward matters which were even contained in the sketch we mention, but as they were not purely political we have refrained from doing so. What we now give will enable every unprejudiced person to judge correctly of the public life of these two men.

NOTES FOR HISTORY.

AT the opening of the electioneering campaign of 1846, Gen. Paez publicly declared that he had no candidate, that he had no one to propose, and that he would obey any one the nation might select according to the constitution. He remained firm in this idea until the month of June, when, on his return from Apure, perceiving that Guzman's chance of being elected had greatly gained ground, and having a decided terror of such an event, he thought that he ought to favor one of his opponents, and the one who was the most likely to succeed. Being in Calabozo, he there first manifested his inclination for the election of General José Fadeo Monagas, then remembering that this General had said to him in 1839, that thenceforward their two swords should be but one, or something to that effect.

Public opinion manifested itself still more openly towards September, when it appeared divided between Monagas, Guzman and Salom. Guzman being set aside by the revolution of September, Blanco became the third candidate; the latter and Salom were both utterly offensive to Paez, for they were perhaps the only two chiefs in Venezuela who would not in any way recognize his influence and preponderance. To this being added the appointment of General Monagas by General Soublette as second in command of the constitutional army, and indubitably by agreement with Paez, gave additional importance to the Monagas party, and the conduct of the latter in the September crisis turned the scale of public opinion completely in his favor.

It would be most curious to expose all that then took place ; we cannot flatter ourselves that we know all the secret springs which were set in motion at that period ; we shall, however, set forth that which we are positive is correct.

General Paez was convinced that the Presidency of General Monagas was the most suitable to his views, and this from many special personal considerations which were important to him, and that he possessed sufficient popularity to insure success ; he was also convinced that the result of the election of senators and representatives was such, that either he himself, or some of his friends, could influence at least the half and one more of the members of Congress to return the candidate he favored. Angel Quintero, whom he had retained near him after the events at Yuma, saw with alarm that Monagas was a candidate for the presidency, and offered, in a thousand ways, to make up matters between Salom and Paez. His offer, which many thought judicious caused, the question to be settled in another manner.

It was necessary, above all, to ascertain what was the feeling of Monagas with regard to the fate of Guzman,* and how he would conduct himself towards Paez, and with this view commissioners were sent to him to promote an interview. Their meeting in the plains was twice prevented by the sudden illness of General Monagas, and at last it remained as an understood thing, that Paez was to go to La Guaira to receive him on his landing there. General Monagas, who could not comprehend that a man was to be killed merely because a party desired it, pointing him out as a necessary victim ; a party at the head of which was Paez, and who, seeing things only from a distance, judged of them from what he had read in the public papers, considered Guzman as the most guilty man in all Venezuela, and

* During the progress of the election, an insurrectionary movement took place. Guzman was accused of being the chief instigator and leader of it, and was condemned to death by the oligarchical party, then in power.

so considering him, his language would necessarily be the expression of his opinion. He had seen General Paez supporting the government, he knew that he was aiding his election, had received flattering letters from him; he could not, therefore, express himself in any other terms than such as would be pleasing to Paez, and the commissioners would necessarily repeat to him what Monagas said. All this was very natural, and notwithstanding the suspiciousness of Quintero and of many of the Oligarchists of Caracas, who had been alarmed at the non-realization of the proposed interviews, yet as they were obliged to vote for somebody, and the moment had arrived for doing so, they determined to stand the hazard of the die and to vote for Monagas. It was not in the hands of the President whom they elected that they thought they were placing the reins of government, but in those of Paez, whom they thought capable of fascinating Monagas, and of making him bend to all his caprices. Monagas was not the President for whom they voted; it was Paez; and all that they have written attributing to the President a breach of faith and want of consistency, because he did not follow out the views of the party who had elected him, is without any species of foundation, for Monagas well knew that they had not elected him of their own free will, but that being compelled to choose between men who were not of their own exclusive faction, they inclined towards the one who appeared to them as the most likely to be managed by Paez; so that this very election of Monagas was an insult offered to him, and a further proof that they thought not of the welfare of their country, but merely how they could most securely continue their abominable domination. But let them say what they will, let them allege what they may please, this is the naked truth, divested of all the ornaments with which they have sought to conceal it, and General Monagas is not, as they have imagined him, so dull of comprehension as not to have seen through them. To prove

that which is above written, if it require proof, it will suffice to cite facts which are abundantly notorious, and which cannot in any way be denied, and these are : Firstly, the interest which was evinced in endeavoring to get Monagas to see and compromise himself with Paez before the election took place, and the excessive displeasure with which the party received the intelligence that the interviews had not been effected. Secondly, the missions for that purpose, and also with that of ascertaining the opinions of Monagas. Thirdly, the great pomp with which they prepared the entrance of Paez into the capital on the 7th of February, 1847, he appearing as a man superior to the government, to the President elect, and as the only support of the country and of its institutions. Fourthly, the subsequent conduct of Paez, who stationed himself at La Guaira, with Quintero and others, to surround the President on his arrival, and to keep at a distance from him all persons not connected with the domineering club. For about a month was he thus lying in ambush, notwithstanding that his duties as General-in-Chief of the army, which was operating against Rangel, called him elsewhere. Fifthly, all that was done after the President did arrive. It was disgraceful to see how a few men pretended thus to take possession of the first magistrate of a Republic, and to hear them flattering themselves that he would act only as they desired. Sixthly, the administration which in this manner they succeeded in getting General Monagas to appoint, an administration that had been rejected by the great majority of the Republic, by many of these very oligarchists, by Soubllette himself, by Dr. Alegria, and so many others. Seventhly, the plan which Paez and Quintero unfolded, for restricting the popular suffrage, and of appointing Paez general-in-chief of the militia, even to making him independent of the executive power. Are more facts than these required ?

The tie which bound together all this tissue of abominations was at once shameful and horrible. It was necessary to

have seen and been acquainted with Paez and Quintero many years previously, and also at this period, to feel assured that they were the same men who had in former days thought of their country's welfare, although they did so while taking care of their own; intractable pride, a decided resolution to preserve their own dominating power, at any cost whatsoever, and even a ferocity till then unknown in our annals, all this could have been discerned in them by any acute observer. We know many worthy men, many who are reputed oligarchists, but who in reality were impartial between the parties, who solely from the force of certain circumstances, and from fear of the power of Paez, appear to be oligarchists, who have lamented in conjunction with ourselves the reality of the facts to which we have referred. Unfortunately they were not so intimately persuaded as we were that the ideas of Paez and Quintero tended to a real conspiracy against our institutions, that it was necessary to oppose the realization of their plan because it involved the ruin of the country, that there was no cause to fear the phantasma with which they strove to terrify the unwary, and that everything well considered, it was the duty of every good citizen to continue to support the legitimately constituted Government, which moreover clearly appeared to be sustained by an immense majority, a fact not very frequent in history, and which those alone would pretend to overlook who aspired, at all hazards, to domineer over the country, or men who dared not venture to set aside Paez and look calmly at both sides of the question. It was sufficient to hear them, to know that the point they aimed at, was, that a small junta of men should concentrate, and secure to themselves unlimited power over the nation, and for ever. These men, in their own estimation, alone were patriots: they alone had understanding, and possessed feelings of honor, they alone could serve for all, and nothing more was wanting but that they should actually swear to each other not to permit any one

who was not so sworn to be appointed to any public office, whether the making such appointment was in the province of any public authority, or depended on popular election. It will scarcely be believed that in a republic like Venezuela such a project could have been conceived by only a few individuals, although for seven years it had been rumored that such a plan existed; and yet these are the facts, and such had been the abuse of power in the elections, that it was impossible that the eyes of the great national majority could be any longer blinded, and more especially when it was seen that an administration, composed of these very men, preferred throwing up their places rather than agree that the President should have the right of nominating men to office who did not belong to the circle of the adepts.

The Quintero administration fell, because he and his clique alone could not perceive that such an administration was impossible in the existing state of opinion in Venezuela, and General Monagas began to govern of his own free will; he made himself independent of Paez, and this sufficed to induce the latter to declare war against him. The conspirators, (for they deserve to be so called,) had decreed the death of Guzman, and insisted that it would be the salvation of the country, because, doubtless, according to their erring and atrocious mode of viewing things, the blood of Guzman dividing forever the few who wished to shed it from the remainder of the nation, would insure the continuance of power in the hands of those who held it, from the close union in which they would be bound together; they also meant to realize their plan for restricting the popular suffrage and that of an extra constitutional militia Government. The President, who was in Aragua, and ignorant of the state of public affairs, had believed Guzman to be the promoter of great evils, and that he had been the active chief of the conspiracy, soon discovered that in reality the facts were not as they had been reported; but nevertheless respect-

ing three consecutive sentences which had been pronounced against him,* and believing that vengeance would be satiated and angry passions calmed, by removing from the scene of combat the man who occupied it so entirely, commuted the penalty of death to which Guzman had been condemned for that of perpetual exile; and here we have his great crime,—here we have the great reason for calling him a traitor, and accusing him of a breach of faith—here we have the motive for declaring war against him to the death, and for immediately commencing to conspire against his authority—here we have the true cause of all that subsequently ensued. We recollect that talking at the time when this commutation took place, with men who were conversant with the intentions of the conspirators they frequently repeated to us, “*Monagas will infallibly fall, there is no possible reconciliation with him: there is no remedy, he will fall, he will fall, he will fall! they will overthrow him, irremediably they will overthrow him!*” and we have besides many other private reasons for believing that from that moment was concerted the conspiracy which we have seen unfold itself in January and February 1848.

* Guzman had been condemned to death by the judge of first instance at the instigation of Quintero; then, on appeal to the superior court, composed of three judges—all being members of the oligarchical party, and appointed by this same minister of the interior and of justice, the sentence was confirmed, as it was also by the supreme court; but the latter, being unable to commute the penalty which had been pronounced by two courts, strongly recommended the prisoner to the mercy of the Executive.

The party felt so certain that Guzman would be shot that they caused a communication to be opened through a wall of the church of San Jacinto, that the prisoner might be conducted to the public square of that name without being led round through the streets, fearing that the people might attempt to rescue him. One of the representatives (Juan Garcia, a carpenter,) spontaneously constructed a bench upon which Guzman was to be shot, and made the coffin in which he was to be buried. This man was one of those who rushed from the hall of Congress in the melée of the 24th of January, and was killed. Singularly enough, he was buried in the very coffin he had prepared for Guzman.

It is true that Paez ostensibly spoke and wrote letters advising that the constitutional President should be sustained ; but as it is not from mere words that history is to judge, but from facts, we shall continue to relate the most notorious ones, and which prove that Paez at first said one thing but thought another. This is by no means a rare occurrence : on the contrary it is one that frequently happens, particularly with men of his crafty nature, and it is known that history will never be able to absolve even Bolivar from having aspired to the usurpation of sovereign power, notwithstanding his protestations to the contrary, and this only because his intimate adherents acted as if in reality Bolivar had formed such intentions. When men like Bolivar, Santander and Paez, who really exercise an all-powerful influence over those who are attached to them, and of whom they are the sole hope and rock of salvation—when, we say, such men really and positively desire a thing they know how to act and express themselves so that their real desire shall be understood ; they know how to select a Pedro Briceño Mendez, a Soto, a Peña, or a Quintero who are deserving of their entire confidence, who have publicly the reputation of enjoying it, and who, notwithstanding, boast that they act and speak with perfect liberty, but are the most fitting instruments through whom they can insinuate their real desires with all the sagacity which is necessary to avoid giving any explicit or tangible proof against them. This method of proceeding is already so old, it is moreover so natural to act in this way, that it is difficult to comprehend that ambitious men should be so dull as to imagine that the people, so deeply interested in observing them, do not see through it. Of what service then these letters and these formal conversations in favor of the Government, if a man's acts contradict them in the perception of those who can appreciate them ? Let us proceed, then, to the facts. It may be said that all Venezuela has heard Quintero boast that he enjoyed in the most intimate and absolute

degree the confidence of Paez, and what he said was supported by undoubted facts. Paez began in 1846 by pardoning the whole of the insurgents in the plains, and in doing so exceeded his powers, for it was not within his province to pardon the chiefs; notwithstanding this he pardoned the Herreras, Cabeza, Ledesma, and Martinez, who were not only chiefs of the faction but criminals of an atrocious nature. When Quintero saw this he flew to his patron's side, and instantly Paez changed his conduct, a thing of which Quintero also boasted, without reflecting that Paez by such measures, had completely and efficaciously tranquillized the plains.

Paez sent Colonel Austria to Caracas upon a mission of peace and the reconciliation of all parties, the result of which was to be the saving the life of Guzman and perfect intelligence and cordiality between men of all opinions. Austria took the necessary steps to fulfill his mission, and his first measures were attended with success; but Quintero arrived and soon after Paez, and then, in unison with those who in Caracas demanded the blood of Guzman, undid all that Austria had effected and forced Paez into a sanguinary path, which until then he had avoided. Quintero followed Paez as his inseparable shadow, and carried this so far as not to allow him to speak to any one in Caracas, excepting those who supported his own views. Quintero was *Minister of Justice*, and he dictated to the judges the sentence to be passed on Guzman, and after leaving the Government house he would call on Paez, whose face would become radiant with delight at the audacity with which the minister (Quintero) effected such surprising things. "O! what a minister!" would Paez exclaim, and the members of the Cabal would repeat in chorus and with ferocious joy, "Oh! what a minister! This is indeed a minister!" Quintero resigned his portfolio that he might not fail in the minutest particle of his plan of exclusive domination, and Paez reproved him for not being sufficiently pliant so as to keep in till he saw

whether it would not be possible to prevent the commutation of Guzmán's sentence. Quintero and the directorial Cabal declared the President an enemy to the country from the moment of the commutation ; what they undertook was not a constitutional opposition, but an attack, a factious conspiracy ; the language of "*La Prensa*," and of the "*Espectador*" from the moment of their publication, was easily discerned to be the language of disappointed rage, of the most concentrated indignation, which admitted no medium, and which had no other object than to prepare the coalition against the President in the Congress in order to depose him and get rid of him, no matter by what means ; and Páez, whether speaking with Quintero or in correspondence and continual contact with the directors of the intrigue in Caracas, could do nothing with any of them ; they acted, if we are to believe him, even contrary to the desire of Páez, who wept like a crocodile over the evils which the press occasioned, and this, notwithstanding their editors proclaimed him "*the centre of politics and the sentinel of the country*," and openly excited certain men and certain districts of the country, which they supposed to be favorable to Páez, to prepare themselves to sustain him in an enterprise against the first magistrate. And Páez remained silent although he was entreated in every way to reprove these manifestly factious tendencies, and the friends of Páez in Caracas were constantly saying that there was no remedy, that if he did not capitulate with Páez the President must fall, and other similar sayings, and Quintero went and came from Maracai to Valencia, and "*El Espectador*" continued more and more acrid, more and more irreconcilable, and the principal leader of the conspiracy in Caracas went to Valencia to concert measures with Quintero and to agree in the sight of every body, to plans and projects of death ; and Páez was tranquil, and Páez approved everything after his own fashion, although he was always talking of obedience to the President and of his respect for the Constitution ;

and the conspirators, notwithstanding, showed themselves more and more confiding in Paez. Can the evidence of a conspiracy be clearer than this ?

The party asserted that the conduct of the Government, in placing arms in the hands of those whom they called their enemies, was the cause of the progress of the conspiracy ; that the President gave offices only to Reformers or Guzmanites, the enemies of Paez, whose intention it was to *militarize* the country, and many other similar stupidities ; and these assertions serve only to confirm what we have already said as to the true cause of the conspiracy, that is to say, the aspiring to retain, at any cost, the reins of power, and the desire to secure exclusive domination in the hands of Paez and his adherents. As they had lost all public opinion, as they did not calculate upon the people whose right of suffrage they pretended to restrict, they could not act in the usual legal manner, they could not think of contending for power by succeeding in the elections, and they were compelled to intrench themselves in the last elected Congress, in which they could hope for a majority, a majority which had been obtained by innumerable abuses in the preceding elections. Why did they not in imitation of the conduct of the liberal party propose to refer to public opinion to determine whether they should remain the arbiters of the nation's destiny by means of a triumphal election ? Had they not before their eyes the noble and republican example of a party which, during the space of seven years, had gone on steadily gaining ground in public opinion until it had at length completely dispossessed its oligarchical opponents ? If the irregular conduct of the Government was the cause of theirs, would it not have been an easy matter for them by means of a dispassionate and decorous discussion to have enlightened the nation and thereby have triumphed in the elections ? No, this was not the cause ; they had lost their power and were resolved on regaining it immediately, not by the means of public opinion, but by a conspiracy.

It is true that the Government sought for those men who stood highest in public opinion in order to give them places under it ; but in this, far from failing in its duty, it acted with due regard to truly republican principles, and it mattered little whether they had been reformers in 1835 or Guzmanites in 1846, if the people had confidence in them ; but it was precisely this that the conspirators could not tolerate, it was this that most irritated them, and in proportion to their erroneous wanderings it was necessary the vigilance of the Government should increase, for the public welfare demanded that it should not trust to any of those who had leagued with the conspirators, and from not having rigorously adhered to such a line of conduct, the Government has frequently been deceived and imposed upon. It is necessary to repeat over and over again that the real and unpardonable crime of which the Government was guilty in the eyes of the conspirators, was the not having acquiesced in the parricidal and atrocious plan of Paez and Quintero, to sacrifice Guzman, diminish the popular suffrage, and to raise in the person of Paez a military dictatorship, superior to the Government itself. When they found that they could not obtain the sanction of Monagas to such a plan they declared that it was necessary to rid themselves of him at any cost, and as no fraction of power remained to them excepting through the Congress, they appealed to it, although in order to meet their views it was necessary that it should commit an abuse of its power.

But let us not anticipate. We have already reached the 20th of January 1848 ; it is necessary we should refer to other previous acts. The morality and pretensions of the conspirators may be judged of from the following. Thinking men of all parties disapproved of the excesses of the press anterior to the factious movements of September 1846, and an universal clamor was raised for the reformation of the law. It would have been thought that forming the jury of men having the qualifications

of Senators, would have offered sufficient guarantees that abuses of the press would not be tolerated, and although the law remained extremely restrictive, General Monagas himself, without being much influenced thereto by Quintero, ordered it to be enforced under the persuasion that it was necessary to prevent such abuses as had previously taken place. The law being passed, the domineering club selected their jury from among the most prominent men of their party, and no one could have imagined that such men would ever have committed the same abuses which they had so much reprobated in the Guzmanites; but it was seen, and with astonishment, that the predictions of many of the liberal party were verified. Two accusations were made against "*La Prensa*;" they were clear and demonstrated with admirable reason and justice, and notwithstanding this, these men declared that there were no grounds on which to form an action, and that the press could, with impunity, serve as a public instrument of conspiracy, defamation and contemptuous ridicule. Can the factious tendency of this party be made more evident? Could the President rely upon the justice and impartiality of the chamber? And this party proceeding, as it did proceed, by factious measures without any respect whatsoever to law, morality, or justice, had it any right to pretend that consideration for it should be retained? That which they still enjoyed they abused by using it to deceive, and the better to prepare the plans for their conspiracy.

We were placed in a favorable position for observing all that was going forward, our heart free from hatred and rancorous passions—with ardent patriotic feelings, and an earnest desire to harmonize the contending parties and thus prevent a civil war; we did not omit to use every means in our power, that could contribute to breaking up the conspiracy, and particularly with regard to its chief or principal head and sole support, General Paez, who is essentially responsible for the evils which

now afflict the country ; and in proof of what we have asserted we will also refer to facts.

The first is, that being the acknowledged and faithful friend of General Paez, as soon as we saw the turn affairs were taking, and not yet believing in those who so strenuously asserted that he was incapable of tolerating any one who would not conduct himself according to his will, we addressed ourselves to him in private, and with the most cordial friendship expressed to him our views upon the subject, demonstrating to him that Quintero was conspiring—that Quintero was much injuring him in public opinion, and that if he did not publicly reprove the use made of his name by representing that he was the head of a factious opposition, he would be irretrievably lost, and would appear to all the world as the servile imitator of Santander. We endeavored to prove to him that he ought to side with the community at large, and not with a faction, however wealthy it might be ; that it was the people who had aided him in acquiring his glory, that the people did not support the conspirators, and that his duty and his interest, if he wished to save himself, called upon him to place himself at the head of the people and oppose the faction who were conspiring against the President. He replied to us in a careless, negligent manner, and defended Quintero. We again wrote to him with still more energy, and with facts and incontestable arguments, but not being able to deny the truth of the facts nor to disprove the correctness of the arguments we brought forward, the only answer he made to us, was to tell several persons in Maracai that we had lost our senses.

Now for the second. Not being altogether undeceived by the disappointment we had undergone, and it appearing to us that General Paez might desire to withdraw himself with honor from the public arena, we took advantage of a circumstance that occurred, to ascertain whether His Excellency, the President, would appoint him to undertake a very honorable diplo-

matic mission in Europe, and having found that H. E. was very favorably disposed to such a measure, we wrote to General Paez, stating to him that we were authorized to assure him that he would be appointed to such a mission, if he were disposed to afford this new service to the country. He replied to us that he could not say whether he would accept it or not, because there were family occurrences which occupied his mind entirely, and as no formal nomination had been made, he could not engage to think upon the subject. In consequence, the President, who did not wish to give an appointment which might be scoffed at, deputed a respectable person of Caracas to go to Paez, and in his name make him the offer of the appointment, and the result was another disappointment.

And for the third. During the few days which General Juan Jose Flores remained in Venezuela, seeing that the state of society threatened a civil war, from the exaggerated pretensions of the conspirators against the President of the Republic, he endeavored to bring about a meeting between General Paez and the President, at which they might devise some means for putting an end to the agitation which existed in men's minds. The sole fact that any one should conceive it necessary for the first magistrate of a republic to implore the influence of a citizen in order to restrain a small portion of the people at whose head was this same citizen, is in itself a mournful and degrading fact to the whole nation—a proof that there existed a citizen superior to the government, to the institutions, to the laws, and even to the nation itself; a proof that this citizen is the real and sole arbiter of the fate of the nation, and as soon as such a state of things manifests itself, the nation can no longer be deemed a nation, but a miserable congregation of men incapable of being free and governing themselves; because at any given moment this man might disappear from the face of the earth—this man, who alone is the people, the government, the nation, the everything—and the nation might believe itself

to be, or be really, in a state of utter anarchy. Paez was, according to his partisans, with regard to Venezuela, ten times more necessary than Bolivar to Colombia, in 1829, according to the Bolivarians. In such a state of things we also thought it a patriotic duty, rather than be exposed to a civil war—that the President should not refuse to see Paez, if such a meeting could be efficacious in preventing such a calamity. General Flores engaged, no doubt, because the conspirators exacted it, that the President should go as far as Las Cocuizas* to meet Paez, and we could not induce him to desist from this pretension, although we considered it a very extravagant one. The President's consent was obtained to go that distance: but a fit of illness, which was in reality severe, whatever may have been asserted to the contrary, prevented him from undertaking the journey. We felt much the miscarriage of this interview for the country's sake; however, when we were informed of the manner in which Paez presented himself at Las Cocuizas, we were highly delighted that General Monagas had not been able to meet him there. Paez had come to meet the President accompanied by Quintero, one of the men who weekly vomited forth the most atrocious insults against the President in his newspaper, the "*Espectador*," and with the knowledge and sufferance of Paez. Could there be a more uncourteous act or one less likely to promote the object of the interview? Could Quintero be an element of union or of concord in such circumstances? However, this was not the only scandalous and insolent incongruity in the conduct of Paez. It is positive that he was accompanied by a hundred men, the greater part of whom were armed; whereas, the negotiator of the interview had engaged that neither of the parties should take with him more than from four to six friends. Paez desired to present himself to the President at a distance of fourteen leagues from the capital, as a man superior to him, to the government, to the

* A place about forty miles distant from Caracas.

institutions, and to everything ; as the arbiter of Venezuela, as the representative of a power which came to impose conditions on the President of the Republic, if he meant to continue in that office. And is there a Venezuelan Republican who could witness this insolence with cold blood ? Is there a man with any feelings of dignity who believes that it is honorable to belong to a nation in which a citizen can thus ostentatiously show himself superior to its first magistrate ? Is it not disgraceful even that this should be a question between republicans ? Venezuela had flattered one of her sons, honoring him and rewarding him far beyond what his services had merited, and in return he was preparing vexations for her, and threatening to reduce her to ashes if she did not submit to him. However, it is very rarely that the judgment of a nation goes astray. From all quarters of Venezuela, numberless addresses were received deploring the projected journey of the President to Las Cocuizas, and afterwards rejoicing that it had not taken place, and announcing to him that its realization would have produced a deplorable effect on public opinion ; so natural is the feeling of national dignity, and so clear was the necessity for its demonstration on this occasion !!!

Each of these three important facts we have just narrated is so complicated, and involves a series of many others so intimately bound together, that to a man of impartial judgment either of them would suffice effectually to convince him that General Paez was seriously combining a conspiracy that should indefinitely insure to himself supreme power. This was clear, most clear ; however, that which placed the seal of evidence on the existence of the conspiracy was the fact which we are now about to add.

Paez had precautiously obtained from the Soubllette government permission to absent himself from the country ; for he had said, that if the administration which was to follow should not be favorable to him, he would prefer to expatriate himself

rather than oppose it, or remain in the country at the risk of his life. This sole fact demonstrates the importance which he assumed, and as to how far he considered it necessary that the new President should adopt his ideas for governing the country, or, what is the same thing, should be subjected to him. That an administration should act against the opinion of a man like Paez, who was at the head of a party, essentially intolerant and exclusive, was equivalent to being an insurrectionist; and he could not consider that his life was exposed without insulting and throwing discredit on the government, or establishing a pretext to rebel against it; so that Paez could see no *mezzo termine* between the country being governed by himself and his party, or his absenting himself from it in order not to become a factious oppositionist; offering, nevertheless, by his absenting himself for such a reason, a new insult to the government and to the whole republic. These fears and these precautions on the part of Paez, show clearly that he thought more of himself than of his country; for, had it been otherwise, had he not entertained these misgivings, had his conscience been clear, such ideas would never have occurred to him; but the man who aspired to impose his policy upon an administration could not be altogether tranquil, as it might happen that he would not be able to succeed in his designs; and this was the reason for which Paez had taken the precaution so long beforehand of asking from General Soublette a permission to leave the country. We shall now see what use Paez made of this permission.

It is a fact that in the month of December, 1847, he appeared in the eyes of the whole of the republic to be at the head of the virulent and factious opposition formed against the administration; and that he had not only time to withdraw himself, but had offered to him a most honorable means of absence, which he refused to accept. It was at that time, under the pretext of some cattle business, that he requested permission to go into

the province of Casanare (New Granada,) and he gave to this object all the appearance of a political estrangement from Venezuela, in order that his adherents might have the opportunity of entreating him to remain, and thus obtain a public document which should implicate all those who desired his political predominance. And, in fact, all the conspirators fulfilled the desires of Paez; for they drew up, on the 26th December, at the same time they were urging the interview at Las Cocuizas, an exposition which they got some individuals to sign, who did not at all understand the importance and factious tendency of the step they were taking.

In this exposition it is asserted that those who drew it up knew that *Paez was thinking of abandoning the country*; it is clear that such news must have emanated from himself; for, that which he had solicited of the government was, not to be allowed to abandon the country, but a permission to go into the New Granadian territory, should he have occasion to do so, and for only a very few days, if the motive he alleged had been the true one; and, therefore, the request he had addressed the government was merely a pretext by which to give publicity to his feigned absence, and to give a color of some sort to the petition which induced him to favor us by remaining to direct the conspiracy. In this document the predominant idea was, wholesome and pernicious doctrines were in deadly contest, *that the latter being supported and extolled, while the former were discredited from their appearance of weakness*; that is to say, that Paez and his party were in *deadly contest* with the government and the people; was not this insinuation clear enough? Is it not evident that Paez and his party considered themselves *in deadly contest* against the government and in favor of those wholesome doctrines, that is to say, *supporters to the death* of those which they called wholesome doctrines, by means of deeds, of arms, and of conspiracy? And we say that Paez acknowledged this, not merely from the exposition having been addressed to him, but because in his reply he accepted the

whole context of such manifestation. "*I have before me,*" he says, "*a picture of the Republic most gloomily sketched;*" (the deadly contest between good and evil doctrines, between Paez and the government of the nation); and then he adds, *that the sole feeling he could express, was that he only desired to live that he might be useful to his country!* and this he says in relation to the idea that the government was sustaining evil doctrines and that they were in *deadly contest* with the good ones; therefore it is clear that he proposed to himself to be useful to his country in this *deadly contest*, and this in whatever light it might be considered, may surely be termed declaring himself in open rebellion.

In the whole of this manifestation nothing more is done than to develop this idea of the *deadly contest* in which it is said were engaged the good and the evil doctrines, assuming, before it had ever met, *that the Congress was in combat with the Executive Power.* And this was said by an infinitesimal portion of the Venezuelan community, which had arrogated to itself the right of declaring war by anticipation between the national powers; this was said to a citizen who was General-in-Chief of the Republic; who ought to have been, from many reasons, the most obedient of all citizens; and this was said to the very face of the Government; this citizen thus recognized as the chief of a party and assenting to be so recognized, instead of calling his partisans to order, and telling them that he could not accept the declaration which they had made of the national powers being in contention, that this was anticipating the decision of Congress upon the subject, prejudging its determination, and divesting its decisions of all justice, and impartial character, and in short, instead of saying to them, we are not the judges of the Government, you speak the language of a faction and I cannot approve your language without being compromised myself; instead of acting thus, we say, he comes out with an offer of his services to the country, assuming as posi-

tive and actually existing, all that a factious club had been pleased to assert. It is seen, therefore, that Paez and his partisans were openly conspiring before the meeting of Congress, and from all this may be clearly deduced that the plan of the manifest, and the reply to it, with the pretext of his absence, were all combined and agreed upon with two objects which are extremely evident: 1st. That Paez desired that his partisans should compromise themselves in an explicit manner, and by their signatures, that he might have that support and pretext, and that this declaration of the conspiring club being echoed throughout the Republic, the party in all points of it might prepare themselves to second the views of the director. 2d. Paez wished to say to his partisans in Congress, Be not alarmed, my friends, I have already given you the example, I have compromised myself, now do you finish your part of the work by giving me the power, and we will divide the prize between us; *I have a rope round my neck, will you leave me in that position?* Can there be any doubt that members of Congress, partisans of Paez, could be otherwise than conspirators? On the 13th of January the party in Calobozo repeated the same farce which had been played by the 200 in Caracas with regard to the manifesto; the same ideas were prominently brought forward by them, the supplication as to *the absence of the only centre of union, the support of all good doctrines, of all hopes of salvation, the threatened death* which the administration was about to inflict on the institutions, and its contention with the Congress *not yet assembled, &c.* But it is to be observed that in the exposition of the Calabozo party, and this history will duly note, the language is more explicit, more resolute, much less obscure; and this was because the time was drawing nearer and Paez was already in campaign in the Llano. They no longer talked merely of the legislative and executive powers being in contention, but said that it was necessary that Paez should hold himself ready to *execute the orders of the Congress.*

What then were these orders the execution of which was not to be confided to the Executive Power? They could be no other than those of the conspiracy. Paez answered in the same sense as to the address from Caracas, and also with more freedom, less concealment. "*The picture you have drawn to me of the actual state of the Republic is a mournful one. The Republic cannot be lost,*" he says, "*Providence has not denied to us its protection, and within six days the Congress will have assembled; from its enlightened knowledge, its patriotism and energy, we may expect every benefit. My duty is to sacrifice myself for the country, &c.*" We have here the same ideas, more openly avowed, in order to animate the Congress, or his partisans who formed a portion of it, that he might not be left entirely to his own resources. What would have become of Paez after these answers, if the Congress had not responded to his hopes?

It is clear that he would have been a lost man, and it is also clear that for men who were compromised and wished to be consistent, there was no other course to take than to execute the plans which such answers referred to. And the representatives, who were about to arrive, to be judges under such influences, would they have their souls free and their hearts tranquil, as the proper fulfillment of their duty required they should be? Were they or were they not members of the faction? And let it be observed that the exposition from Calabozo and the reply to it were published in "*La Prensa*" of the 23d of January, THE VERY DAY ON WHICH THE CONGRESS WAS INSTALLED, and to which were added games of the self-same nature, played between the inhabitants of San Sabastian and Paez, and between some few children of Calabozo and Paez. In a Republic which possessed a Constitution and Laws and Government and People, children were taught to say to Paez, "*It is enough for you to know that we are Calabozians, to be assured that we are lovers of order, and that Paez is our pre-*

dominant idea." That children should proclaim a man to be their predominant idea ! Was ever such prostitution heard of, or a greater relaxation of wholesome principles ? Were these the good doctrines they were defending ? Could they venture to say so without shame ? It is, however, demonstrated by conclusive arguments that the circulation of the notice of Paez's intended withdrawal from the country was but a stratagem which should afford his partisans an opportunity of addressing factious manifestoes to him, to which he might reply in terms which conveyed this meaning to the Representatives : "Do you but act according to my wishes and you may rely on me and on all those who are thus implicated ;" and consequently it is also proved that a Chamber, the majority of which was composed of men intimately connected with Paez and his faction, and *many of them active coadjutors in the preparatory measures of the conspiracy*, was not in reality what the Constitution required a legislative chamber should be, that is to say, dispassionate, just, impartial ; but, on the contrary, a gang of partisans resolved on abusing the power which had been confided to them for the good of the country, under the pretext that the President was upholding evil doctrines, but in reality trumped up in order to favor the usurpation of public power meditated by the man who could not tolerate that the country should be governed without consulting him.

Another public and scandalous act was performed by Paez and Quintero that no doubt might remain as to their intentions, and that the representatives who were compromised should not vacillate, from being alarmed at the enormity of the criminal attempt they meditated. The act was this : The former sent his family to Caracas, recommended to the protection of a foreign diplomatic agent, in order that he might give them an asylum in his house should it become necessary, and taking measures in a public manner to obtain lodgings for them as near as possible to the house of the said diplomatic

agent ; and Quintero acted in much the same way, giving orders that his family should embark for Curazoa, while they both marched together toward Calabozo. And can any one doubt, after all that has been stated, that when Paez and Quintero, in the early part of January, proceeded toward Calabozo, they were at that very moment in insurrection against the government and the institutions ? And we will again ask, what would the fate of Paez have been if the Chamber of Representatives, even without consideration to the justice of the case, had at least paused before the idea of launching Venezuela into civil war, the only motive for which was, that the administration would not adopt the ideas of an exclusive and cruel club ? What would have been the situation of Paez who had defied the government, and had commenced the rebellion as a power capable of itself to command in Venezuela, and to prevail over government and people, and who had carried this to such a point that it was already impossible for him to retrocede with honor ? We do not know how he would have acted in such a case, but this is perfectly clear, that his friends and partisans, seeing their chief, their only hope, thus rushing onward, would have considered themselves no longer at liberty even to deliberate, and their only alternative would have been either to sacrifice him or to follow him in the rebellious path he had pursued : and it could not be doubted that in the excited state of passions at that moment, and which they themselves had so much aided to produce, they would have adopted the latter course. They called themselves the intellectual party, and in truth they showed no lack of skill in plotting the conspiracy.

Profound impressions are still produced upon our mind by even the recollection of what we saw and heard between the 15th and the 24th of January, and we nevertheless feel a certain species of intimate conviction that it would be difficult to find any other person whose soul and heart were so com-

pletely disposed to observe with perfect impartiality the conduct of all the parties, and to judge which of them acted with most reason, most justice, and most prudence. Being connected with persons who were intimately acquainted with the operations of the one and the other, and enjoying their confidence, we are in a position to estimate the part which each took in all that then occurred; but our Notes cannot enter into all these details; it is necessary, at the present moment, to omit the names of individuals and to refer only to acts of public notoriety; time will withdraw the veil which we now leave over a part of the events.

As soon as it was seen that Paez and Quintero had set out for the Llano, in the early part of January, and the arrangements they had made for their families became known, there remained not the slightest doubt that they had resolved to rise in rebellion against the Government, and that they evidently calculated on the necessary majority in the chambers to realize their views. But, however clear this might appear, it was not possible that men of sound judgment could persuade themselves, that the perturbation, which passion produces, could reach so extreme a point as to blind the most sagacious, nor that confidence in the omnipotence of Paez could extend so far as to induce them to suppose that a handful of satellites and some 500 or 1000 men at the utmost, who would follow him, could subjugate such a Republic as Venezuela. We, who knew Venezuela, and knew the state of public opinion at the moment, ventured to speak of it to some of the representatives and senators among those who were reputed hostile, and those who did not impute our doing so to unkindness, carried their blindness so far as to assure us that we were altogether mistaken, that we should see the property of General Monagas razed to the ground, and the Republic completely under the dominion of Paez; some of them even going so far as to make reflections on our own individual position, and advising

us to save ourselves. We must confess, that as to those who knew the circumstances, they inclined to believe that public opinion would maintain itself with firmness and unanimity ; but it was of no use whatever for them to prognosticate what would happen, as it occurred to ourselves, for example, regarding General Muñoz upon whom the partisans of Paez ventured to calculate, although we never for a moment had the slightest doubt as to the fidelity of General Muñoz, and this we declared to every one with whom we spoke upon the subject ; however, and it is melancholy to relate it, derision was the only answer we received from some of them, so fascinated were they by the prestige of a man ! This raised a feeling of pity in our breast for these mistaken individuals, but bitter grief as it regarded our country, for it convinced us of the tenacious and even stupid blindness of the conspirators. Unfortunately, neither reason nor reflection were of any avail with men who, when they were asked what was the chief motive which could have occasioned this accusation of the President, replied immediately by uttering some gross stupidity, as for instance, one which we cannot avoid recording, "*the death of Alexander the Great*," and if they were spoken to of the opinion of the people, added, in a tone of security, perfectly astounding, "*Oh ! they can be managed with whips*." It was certainly unquestionable that the conspirators were very determined to strike at all, institutions, country, property, honor and life ; because they were persuaded that the only difficulty which existed was in Paez's finding a pretext for taking up arms ; they wished to bring about this result, let the means be what they might, it appearing to them impossible that they could do otherwise than triumph ; and thus, and only thus, can be explained the conduct of the conspirators. We however repeat, and it is a fact that cannot be subjected even to a doubt, that the opinions and plans of the conspirators from the moment of the breaking up of the Quintero min-

istry and the commutation of Guzman's sentence, were founded only upon the knowledge which they had of Paez's mode of thinking, and on the persuasion of his infallible omnipotence.

Setting out upon this basis, and that of the hostile position which Paez had already assumed, the conspirators considered themselves certain of a triumph, and that within a very few days ; and they did not at all question the legality of their proceedings ; "we have," said they, "more than the number of votes required to suspend a president ; and now we have only to do so : " and because some of them called themselves the Chamber of Representatives, they imagined that this was not as factious and unconstitutional an act as those of Rangel, the Herreras, &c. ; it was, in our conception, much more criminal, since they were intentionally committing an abuse of that power which was conferred upon them solely that they might act justly and always with due regard to the welfare of their country, whereas they were endeavoring to light up the flames of civil war because it tallied with the views of a very scanty number of partisans and those of an ambitious man, who was their leader.

It is afflicting to remember the fury which possessed the minds of the conspirators for some days preceding that of the 24th January, and it was impossible for a philosophic, patriotic and just man to recognize in those madmen the judges of an administration, which might have committed errors, but which had never omitted to respect the Constitution, even when in the midst of circumstances that rendered necessary the adoption of strong measures in order to avoid infinite disasters. It is therefore a well ascertained fact, that thirty-two members of the Chamber of Representatives had agreed on deposing the President, and on removing their sittings to some other city, if they should judge proper so to do, that they might strike the blow with greater security. And to this had Paez led them by the tortuous paths which we have now exposed. They

were not the conscript fathers of the country who came with tranquil hearts, and bandaged eyes, holding the scales of justice to deliberate upon his fate ; but the inveterate, furious and public enemies of the President who had engaged to depose him. It is a pity that they had not the opportunity of unfolding the whole of their plan, for we have the intimate conviction that they intended to turn against the Vice-President of the Republic also, in the event of his not blindly adopting their projects, which consisted in giving Paez a dictatorial power while they were judging and assassinating the President, and this being done, to maintain him in it during the whole time that Providence should please to preserve his life. The conspirators had reached such a degree of excitement as to the necessity for altering the institutions of the country, that they spoke of it with barefaced effrontery, and they looked upon the deposition of the President but as a means by which they should attain that object. This is the truth in all its splendor, let them now say what they please ; at all events, it is the truth with regard to the few conspirators who directed the manœuvres which were to produce as their result the establishment, during his life, of the power of Paez, and this was what was perfectly understood by the President, and by the whole people of Venezuela, when the Congress was installed on the 23d of January, 1848.

In the eighteen years of national life which Venezuela has enjoyed under its present Constitution it has been observed that in all periods of conflict the deputies attended Congress with great punctuality ; but on this occasion it was remarked that there was a visible reluctance, and we who know the personal character of the tardy ones, may venture to assert that the delay in their attendance arose from, either their being forewarned of the attempt about to be made, in which it was intended to implicate them, or being acquainted with the arrangements and plans of their co-members, and feeling that they had not suffi-

cient resolution to oppose them, they did not desire to participate in such a responsibility ; and thus it was that at the installation of the 23d January, 1848, nineteen of the representatives failed to attend, of whom nearly the whole have stated to us that they were either friendly to the administration, or that they were impartial ; that they were not prejudiced, but were resolved to act with the independence and justice of faithful representatives. But for the clamorous proceedings of the conspiracy, at such a period, the whole of the representatives would have hastened to the Congress, and the conspirators on finding that they could not have calculated positively on two-thirds of the votes in favor of the accusation, would perhaps have changed their course and listened to some virtuous and learned men, who, like the unfortunate Santos Michilena, constantly opposed these traitorous views. It moreover was part of the plan of the conspirators, not only to give confidence by their preparatives to those who supported their ideas that they might remain firm, but also to retard the attendance of the timorous, and by those means securely gain the required majority in the Chambers, to carry out their object. As to ourselves, notwithstanding all this, we remained, up to the 23d, in the belief that a feeling of duty would have more weight upon the minds of the delegates of the nation, than the influence of the omnipotence of Paez, and we frequently discussed the matter with this feeling, calculating, we must acknowledge, on the declarations of some persons, which, from subsequent facts, we infer were not sincere. Although we were assured that such a one and such a one were implacable enemies of the administration, we maintained that certain men should not be judged of lightly, and we advised those who spoke with us upon the subject to wait the result, which we imagined would be very different.

And therefore was it, that when we were informed on the 23d, that out of forty-four representatives thirty-two had voted for the removal of the sittings to Porto Cabello, we were

perfectly astounded. It appears that the people of the capital, for the most part, felt as we did with regard to the Chambers, and that sincerely and affectionately attached to the President of the Republic, they had relied on the justice and impartiality of the majority of the legislative body, and that it would prevent the realization of the threats of the inconsiderate writers of the furious opposition. However, the vote of the 23d for transferring the sessions, and the measure of the chamber by which it voted for itself a guard, indefinite in number and to be selected by itself, opened the eyes of every one, and it was seen that a revolution was commenced which threatened to involve the Republic in numerous disasters. Under the pretext that the Chambers had by the constitution the exclusive right of regulating the police in the place where it was in session, the Chamber of Representatives, on the same night of the 23d, authorized the assembling of all men they could gather, well armed and provided with ammunition and carefully selected from the so-called *order party*; and it is clear that the Governor of Caracas, on seeing so great and so imminent a threat against public tranquillity, which the law enjoins him to preserve, was bound to call into service a great portion of the militia. Thus is seen in what strange manner these very conspirators compelled the government to place in the hands of the people, whom they appeared to fear, the very arms by which their plans were to be defeated. More than three thousand men instantly responded to the call of the Governor, and that very night the conspirators would have received an exemplary punishment, but for the great efforts made by the authorities to moderate the indignation and impetuosity of the people. But the torch of discord was already blazing, already were the men of one and the other party resolved to come to blows; all had reflected, each in his own fashion, upon the consequences of a civil war, and had determined to incur them; the one party confiding in Paez and in the moral importance which they

imagined they derived from the Congress being in their favor ; the others confiding in the general opinion of the people, which is the definitive criterion in a Republic, and in the justice of their cause. All was prepared ; the opposing armies had taken their respective positions ; the chiefs, officers and soldiers all fully understood the nature of the question, the cause they were about to defend, and were moreover enthusiastic in it : and with arms in their hands, both parties were only anxious for the moment when they should make use of them. The conspirators, to color their attempts with a lustre of legality, pretending that thirty-two excited, fanatical and implicated citizens, some of them deluded and confiding in Paez, calling themselves the representatives of the nation, had a right to suspend the President of the Republic. Ignorant men ! Had they not insolently presented themselves before the nation as the implacable enemies of the President ? How could they pretend that the nation should consider their decrees as those of impartial judges ? They had lost all prudence, all impartiality, all regard to justice, and they imagined that the result of their machinations would be respected ! Madmen—madmen !—not to apostrophize them in severer terms. There was but one thing certain which they saw before them, and that was civil war ; and they boasted of it, saying that this was what they were seeking, that there was no other remedy, and with that their triumph was assured. Ignorant and stupid men ! And why were they surprised at the event of the 24th of January ? They desired to launch the people into civil war, and they are amazed at their picking up the gauntlet which they had imprudently thrown down to them ! If the 24th of January is to be lamented, it was to you, conspirators, exclusively, that it was owing. These are the fruits of your passions, of your injustice, of your hatred, of your exaggerated pretensions to dominion, of the white sheet which you extended in the public press to blacken, revile, calumniate public authority, and to

excite and provoke, by every means in your power, public hatred against it. This is your work ; that which you so ardently desired ; can you be astonished at it ?

The terrible night of the 23d afforded no instruction to the conspirators, and the Chamber of Representatives met at day-break on the 24th, to approve the provocation which some three hundred men, whom they called their guard, had given the previous night. The news of this fresh scandal had scarcely circulated, when all the citizens appeared seized with sudden fury ; some of them were in favor of the resolutions of the Chamber—others in favor of the executive power and their own rights ; the former, and the greater portion of the latter, assembled with weapons of every description they had been able to procure ; and there were many more, who, not having the means of procuring arms, were going about entreating to be furnished with them, and who meditated getting possession of the park.* The aspect which the city presented at eleven o'clock in the morning was altogether frightful, and particularly to those who, like ourselves, had constantly reproved the idea of an appeal to arms and the exaggerated views of all parties. It was evident that the critical moment was closely approaching, and the only question was, what would be the occasion that would bring it on. One soon occurred which sufficed to bring about a collision, and this was the detention in the Chamber of Representatives of the Secretary of the Interior, who, after having presented the accustomed message of the President of the Republic, was preparing to leave it to present one also to the Senate. This was considered as an arrest of the secretary, and as the two other secretaries were sent for at the same time, it was immediately rumored that they were about to get the whole administration into the chamber, while they voted the suspension of the President, to prevent him having any legal organ through which to transmit his orders. This was sufficient ; some of the people flew to save, as they said,

* The place in which the government arms are stored.

the Secretary of the Interior, and at the moment that they drew near the door of the edifice, a shot fired from a window situated above this door killed citizen Miguel Riverol, an old and distinguished Liberal. The combat then commenced. A few minutes subsequently, another Liberal, Juan Maldonado, was also killed, and the exasperation of the people reached its acme.* The guard of the chamber did not disperse till they had fired frequently ; however, many of the conspirators within the edifice, who were armed, lost their self-possession, were filled with terror, and fled by the roofs and through the windows. They found that they had altogether deceived themselves ; the people whom they had thought to *drive with whips*, obliged them to return to their duty with musket balls ; and when they were persuaded of the reality of this fact, all their valor at once, fortunately for themselves, left them, and their only thought was, how they could save their lives. At that moment, the Chamber of Representatives presented scenes which we will not venture to describe ; it suffices to say, that in it was a depot of arms of every sort similar to those worn by the conspirators ; that one of its members and two of the conspirators, who were not members, ferociously threatened the Secretary of the Interior with death, whom a few minutes afterwards they supplicated to save them, and which effectively he succeeded in doing, and others, in their turn, overcome with fear, also sought in flight a remedy against the effects of their injustice and their own arbitrary and unprecedented proceedings. Three of the representatives were killed, and three individuals engaged in the conspiracy, by rushing out of the building.

At that moment all the authorities combined, including the Executive, were not, nor could they be, sufficiently powerful to stay the popular action, which brooked no control, although they

* They then rushed to the park, a distance of only a few squares, broke open the doors, armed themselves, and hastened to the assistance of their fellow citizens, who were endeavoring to save the Minister of the Interior.

had only to oppose with efficacy the proceedings of some few men who pretended to arrogate to themselves the supreme power. The people of the capital had patiently looked on while the conspiracy was being plotted even before their eyes, because they confided in the impartiality and prudence of the Chamber of Representatives, but from the moment they were convinced that two-thirds of the members *present* were resolved on making an abuse of their legal power, and from being representatives of the nation had converted themselves into mere instruments of an ambitious man and his miserable party, and comprehending the feelings of all the people of Venezuela, which were well known to them, they declared in the face of the whole world that these representatives had transformed themselves into a handful of conspirators, and defied them to prove the contrary by appealing to the nation.

We have recorded these facts after a careful examination, in the manner we believe that they occurred, and have concealed nothing: a very small portion of the militia composed a part of the throng of people who hastened to liberate the Secretary of the Interior; the greater number were not armed militia, they were the people armed with all sorts of weapons, and also with muskets taken from the depot which had been forced by them, in spite of the authorities, and for the reason that these same authorities had not the power to prevent them; because the militia was the force which had charge of the depot,—because it was the force in which the government had confidence—the force which the conspirators could in no way bribe nor gain over to their party,—and this militia was the people with its ideas and connections and its enthusiasm in favor of the government and against the conspirators, so that it was impossible that the government could have thought of confiding the arms of the nation to other hands.

The conspirators and those who thought and desired as they did, have, in consequence of these very acts, brought charges against the government without reflecting that there never yet

has been a government which has committed knowingly a suicidal act, that it was but too apparent that the conspirators intended to depose the President, and plunge the country into a deadly civil war, and that the latter having an intimate conviction of such a conspiracy, was bound in the most imperious imaginable manner to prevent the conspirators from carrying their project into effect ; he, therefore, from precautionary motives called out a portion of the people, and the conspirators who thought of *driving them with whips*, and who eagerly sought the shock of parties and a civil war, despised the armed people and provoked them to the combat, calculating that they were either imbecile or cowardly ; they had deluded themselves on every point, and then became furious against the President, who they imagined ought to have allowed them to do all they would without attempting by any means in his power, to save society from the excesses which they meditated ; and they dare now to attribute to the President the event of the 24th.

Unfortunate would it have been for the conspirators and their accomplices in the chamber of deputies if they had been able to effect even the suspension of the president ! A thousand thanks to the people who prevented them from precipitating themselves into the abyss ! what would have been their fate ? what would have been the fate of the country ? For ourselves, we utterly despise calumny, and we trust that impartial men who read this production will acknowledge that the things happened precisely as it was natural they should happen ; that taking in view the antecedents of which we have spoken, the consequences went on following each other in a logical and necessary manner : that the President took no other part in the event of the 24th, than that which he was bound to take ; glorious it was, highly glorious, for not having been willing to give Paez the satisfaction of submitting to his will, subjecting to it as he desired, the independence of the Executive power in exchange for the influence he exercised in the presidential election ; and glorious also because he had adopted efficacious means to pre-

vent Paez from deceiving the nation. What necessity was there for the President to excite the people to attack the chamber of representatives, when the people were of themselves so much excited that it was impossible to make them retrocede? The President, it is true, did intervene in the affair of the 24th of January; but it was to moderate the impetuosity of the people, and personally to save and to induce others to save many of the conspirators; these are the orders which the President gave; nor could he give others, for they were not necessary, unless indeed that the conspirators pretend he should have ordered the people to fire upon the people to restrain them.

Ungrateful men! his most gratuitous and atrocious enemies owed their lives to him upon that day, and they employed the following one in attributing to him the fury of the people, of which they alone were the first cause. Was it not seen how eagerly they rushed forward by tens of thousands to take up arms solely because it was against Paez and his party, for had the government been authorized to do so and had muskets enough, it might have placed fifty thousand men under arms in thirty days? Was it not seen with what satisfaction thousands of men crossed the country in every direction, supporting with admirable patience, hunger, want of clothing, the rigors of the rainy season, and all descriptions of suffering? Did the conspirators calculate that the magic name of Paez would serve against our institutions as it had done in their favor? Did they confound the goodness of the people with that which they unreflectingly called their imbecility? Were they ignorant that the power of opinion, when it is so uniform and enthusiastic as it was throughout Venezuela in favor of the institutions and the Monagas administration which sustains them, supplies the place of thousands of dollars and thousands of *elevated* intellects? Did they imagine that an assembly of thirty-two men could be called a Chamber of Representatives, when they did not really represent their constituents, but merely a millesimal portion of society which had conspired against the great bulk

of the nation ; and finally, was it that they were so headstrong, so blind, so obstinately bent on a conspiracy that they stood in need of such a chastisement as they received on the 24th, and such a reproof as that they have undergone since the public and barefaced rising of Paez ?

Within a few days it will appear, SANCTIONED BY HISTORY, that the Venezuelan nation had seen with profound grief, but at the same time with horror and indignation, the public plots which a small number of conspirators were contriving, whereby to give a color of legality to the most manifest usurpation and most abominable pretensions. That the nation being placed by the furious will of those it had elected to be its delegates within the august precincts of the legislative chambers, in the dreadful alternative either of sanctioning the degradation and assassination of their President or the death of these same traitorous delegates, decided on adopting this last extreme measure, for so it has been asserted by Paez and his partisans ; they have inundated the Republic with emissaries, with letters from Paez and from private individuals, and pamphlets containing addresses and letters from Paez to the President, and declarations from Chaguaramas and Maracaibo. That Paez and his party did not calculate on any support from public opinion, and consequently had no other reason for their exaggerated pretensions to domination, than because they were occupying certain official stations which they were determined to abuse in order to maintain themselves in power in contradiction to the will of the people. That Paez, disregarding the great duties he owed to the country, considered only how he could insure his own power, and has been the principal author of all the evils which the Republic is now suffering under. That by such reckless and criminal conduct he has entirely forfeited all the merit he had acquired by his former good services, has blackened and defaced his glory, has entailed upon himself a reproach which will adhere to his name through all posterity. And finally, that henceforward no personal power can ever be substituted in Venezuela for the will of

the majority of the people, for the empire of the Constitution and the Laws. Fallen is the Colossus, and the devastation which he has spread wherever he has passed, and the innumerable evils he has inflicted on his country, besides accompanying him forever as a terrible reproach, will serve as a constant and eloquent lesson to the people never again to raise another personal power in Venezuela.

Ambitious men like Paez are the real cause of great evils and of the ruin of their country; while virtuous and moderate men like Washington are the founders of great nations.

From the year 1848, the people of Venezuela will be the true arbiters of their own destiny. They will have a thousand difficulties to surmount, whether it be to repair the effects of the domination of Paez, or to prepare and open to themselves the road to wealth and happiness. But they will never attain these ends excepting by dint of virtues, and especially those of industry, tolerance and moderation.

WE copy from an article which appeared in the New York Tribune of the 15th of November last, a sketch of the events which occurred after the 24th of January, 1848, although it is deficient in many details which cannot now be given from not having the whole of the official documents before us. We, having been eye-witnesses of them, can, however, vouch for its being an accurate account of the events mentioned in it; and it is, at the same time, sufficient to give a clear view of the circumstances which led to the banishment of General Paez and some of his followers, from the territory of Venezuela.

"On the 26th of January, the Chambers again assembled, not

as we have reason to believe, because the Senators and Representatives were compelled to meet by force, but because they were convinced that Congress ought to continue its sittings, in the first place, to pass a measure of clemency which should exonerate its own members who had participated in the bootless conspiracy, and to determine on other measures demanded by the actual state of circumstances. It is true that in a few days afterward the Sessions were suspended, because these very conspirators, believing themselves to be already perfectly safe, thought to favor the cause of Paez, which was their own, by the dissolution of the legislative body. But their project was frustrated, and after an interval of some days the Congress resumed its labors, calling in the supplementary members in place of those who had abandoned the country. When some of the latter protested from Curaçoa against the violence which they asserted had been employed in order to compel them to assemble on the 25th, they were contradicted by some of their own companions, who stated that they had attended the Chamber of Representatives freely and spontaneously. This was also proved by numbers of other persons who had seen them go to the Chamber without any species of compulsion being used towards them.*

*Mr. Acevedo says in his answer to the *Revisor* on the subject: "We cannot but honor many of these representatives for the considerations which we afterwards heard them declare had principally influenced their minds. They were as follows: Firstly: they confessed that a turn had, undoubtedly, been given by their party to political affairs which could only lead to a civil war, and they lamented having been the victims of such a tendency, which in no case, in no country, in no age, has been productive of order, of civilization, or improvement, and much less could it be conducive to the assuring of a republican political system on a solid basis; and from this they deduced the necessity of avoiding the evils of such a war by not giving their concurrence to the Congress. Secondly: they also confessed that they desired to save Paez, who was compromised with them, and they hoped on seeing their new line of conduct that he would have changed his course. Paez was guided more by the strength of the position in which he had placed himself, and the instincts of his own ambition, than by the suggestions of patriotism, and

We say then, that this affair of January 24th grew primarily out of the conspiracy of the Paez party to overthrow the President whom they could not make recreant to his duty. The people of Caracas hated that party as much as they had become attached to the President, and accordingly rose in spontaneous opposition to their outrageous intentions. It is said that Monagas or his friends stirred them up and set them on to murder the opposition Members of Congress. Now in the entire *melée* only three Representatives were shot; one of them, Señor Salas of Maracaibo, was a friend of the President, and had voted steadily in his favor; he was killed near the outer door; but had the attack been designed and executed under the direction of Monagas, he certainly would have taken care that his adherents should not perish in it.

The other representatives killed in the firing were Garcia and Argote, the latter a colored barber of Caracas, and a blind instrument of the Oligarchy. That party was in the habit of nominating illiterate men of the laboring class on its ticket in order to strengthen itself at the ballot box. If this man were not killed by mere accident, which we have no doubt was the case, he must have perished from the indignation the people felt toward him personally, for having betrayed their cause.

One more Representative only fell a victim on this occasion, and he was universally regretted. We mean Señor Santos

this it was which caused his fall. Thirdly: they clearly saw that the dissolution of Congress might augment the moral power of Paez; but they also knew that the popular action against them and their party would be increased tenfold, and that the results, besides being fatal to themselves, would be so, in a great measure, to the country, and they thought it their duty to avoid them as far as in their power. Finally: the minds of many of them were imbued with a sense of gratitude towards the President, who had saved them and their companions in the terrible day of the 24th, and they cast far from them the idea, after that event, of entertaining feelings of revenge against a man, who, by his conduct in that conflict, and by the love which the people manifested for him, was the sole guarantee for their lives, and those of their families, as he was also of those of all the oligarchists in the Republic.

Michelena. On the first alarm he jumped from one of the windows of the Representatives' Chamber, and was badly hurt by the fall. Just as he struck the ground a party of citizens charged down the street with fixed bayonets, and one of them wounded him, though had they recognized him, the universal esteem in which he was held would have saved him from any injury. He died a few days afterward, whether from the wound or the fall is a disputed point in Venezuela, which seems to us of little consequence.

Moreover, it should be remembered that the President's sons were in the building, as was Sanavria, the Minister of the Interior, and several others of Monagas's best friends. They were there with no protection from the pistols and poniards with which the hostile representatives were known to be armed. With these weapons, as we are assured by credible persons who were eye-witnesses of the scene in the Chamber, Sanavria was actually threatened, and had there been any reason at the time to suppose that the attack without proceeded from the President, the lives of these persons would undoubtedly have been taken as an act of desperate vengeance. Besides, they were in equal danger with the others from the mob, as is proved by what happened to Salas and Michelena. In the excitement and exasperation of the moment the mass of people could not distinguish between friends and foes, and had the firing been continued and the contest carried into the building, few of its occupants could have escaped. Now it is not credible that Monagas would have exposed so many of his friends to danger of such a nature. The man who would not consent to the execution of persons legally accused, but unjustly condemned, would hardly let loose such bloody destruction upon the heads of his children, his political and personal adherents, and his enemies altogether. The supposition is too absurd for any mind not heated and distorted by party spirit.

One thing more in this connection: Gen. Paez states that Monagas, in a circular dated Jan. 22, speaks of the event of the

day previous as "a scandalous and lamentable *crime*." We have before us the *Gaceta de Venezuela* containing that circular; the words in it are *un suceso lamentable y escandaloso*, a scandalous and lamentable *event*. And this refers to the attack caused by the firing of the guards. This remarkable fault in translation does not speak well for the integrity of the Defence in general.

Another decisive evidence that there was a conspiracy against the Government and Constitution, is found in the declaration of Señor J. V. Gonzales, editor of *La Prensa*, a representative and one of the chief plotters. He was taken into the presence of the President by the friends of the latter, who had saved him from the fury of the people. He confessed that the conspiracy had been planned for many months, in the first place for the purpose of intimidating Monagas and inducing him to resign the presidency, and afterwards with the object of carrying out the threats they had made. He also said that they all counted on the cooperation of Paez, who had engaged to be their chief.—But it is time to look a little at the personal movements of that gentleman.

Some months previous to Jan. 24th he had been offered by the government an important mission to Europe and had declined it. As the epoch approached for the conspiracy to come to a head, he asked and obtained leave of absence on the pretence of going to New Granada. The elements of the plot all being duly organized, and the support of Congress being, as the Oligarchists supposed, insured, he set out in the direction of New Granada, but evidently with no design of going there. The following facts are conclusive on this point. He left Maracai on the 3d of January, 1848, and went to the plains, in order, as he gave out, to visit a cattle farm of his called San Pablo, which required his personal inspection. There he already had assembled his horses, his guards, and a number of his partisans. Travelling slowly, as is usual in that country, he had time to con-

fer with the most prominent persons in Calabozo, the capital of the plains. With them we have ample reason to believe he negotiated for aid in the rising soon to take place against the government. And why should he take to New Granada a route leading through dense forests, and an uninhabited country where difficulty and privations of every sort must be met on the way, when he might have reached Maracaibo by sea in an easy voyage of three or four days, and thence have gone, without any inconvenience, to San José de Cúcuta? It would seem as if there were only one reason, namely, the conspiracy. Apparently his purpose was to remain in the plains, where he already had some preparations made, where he could find among the inhabitants the most serviceable soldiers in Venezuela, and whence he could best strike an unexpected blow in any direction.

For some time Paez remained at San Pablo, with a considerable number of followers, waiting the news that Monagas had fallen, so that he might return in triumph to Caracas. But instead of this he learned that the plot had signally failed. Now but one resource remained; he had conspired to overthrow the government through the Congress; now he could only hope to overthrow it by open rebellion. Intrigue and hidden treason had lost their potency. He at once unfurled the standard of revolt. His head-quarters were at a place named El Rastro. He succeeded in inducing the population of Calabozo, Orituco, and other portions of the neighborhood, where he had partisans, to revolt also.

At the same time some of the conspirators who after the 24th January had left Caracas for Maracaibo, deceived the inhabitants of that city by false accounts of the events which had taken place, and as, unfortunately, Señor Salas, the representative of that province, had fallen on that day, they managed to excite the minds of the inhabitants against the government, to which they attributed all the evils which had occurred. Ma-

Maracaibo having declared itself, they induced the provinces of Merida and Truxillo to imitate its example.

They also contrived to cause the rising of some districts in the province of Cumaná. Paez had presented himself to the Republic as the restorer of the constitution and the laws, which, he said, had been destroyed by the President. He employed every means within his own reach or that of his partisans, to induce the people to follow him, but in vain. He succeeded in deceiving only those portions of the country above indicated, while all the remainder rose in one mass to sustain the government and defend the institutions of the country. And they rose so spontaneously and with such enthusiasm that had the Executive desired it, it could have placed 50,000 men under arms.

Paez, seeing the inutility of his efforts to unite sufficient forces in Calabozza, and those of the government having advanced toward that city, withdrew into the province of Apure, with the idea of seducing Gen. Cornelio Muñoz from his allegiance; but that loyal veteran of the War of Independence, instead of listening to his perfidious insinuations, marched upon him, although with an inferior force, and meeting him in the savannas of the Araguatos attacked and completely routed him, Paez flying until he reached the territory of New Granada. (*See Appendix A.*)

It will be remembered by those who have paid attention to these details, that the Paez party for a long time held the castle of San Carlos, in the lake of Maracaibo, and that they besieged the town of that name, which was defended by Gen. Castelli for several months. The government at that period had not a marine force of sufficient strength to force the bar of Maracaibo, the Paez party having several vessels to defend the entrance. At length the government mustered a few sailing vessels, which, together with the steamer Libertador, entered the bay, and on the 13th December, 1848, came to action with

the Paez fleet, defeated them, raised the siege of Maracaibo, took possession of the castle of San Carlos, which the Paez party had abandoned, and then pursued the fugitives into the river Zulia. There they took the remainder of their ships, together with the steamer General Jackson, then called the Buena Vista, on board which they took seventy prisoners, mostly officers. At the same time they routed the land forces, which had taken possession of the small town of San Carlos, and sent the prisoners to Puerto Cabello. As an illustration of the bloodthirstiness of the President of the Republic, and his tyrannical severity, we may mention that these prisoners were released and allowed to return to their homes, on giving their parole that they would not again serve against the government of the Republic. Among them were two of Gen. Paez's sons ! The General himself was during the whole of this time at Curaçoa, with his friend Quintero, quietly watching the course of events.

On the 21st of June an attempt was made to assassinate the President. A party of men, instigated by and belonging to the Oligarchical party, came from Chaguaramas, rode up, favored by the darkness of the night, to the President's residence, and attacked the guard, attempting to force their way into the house, crying "*Muera Monagas !*" Fortunately, at the very onset the horse of the leader of this party, Belisario, was shot down, and the confusion occasioned by this gave the guards time to rally to the defence of their general. The assassins were instantly repulsed and took to flight. On the 22d the towns of Guarenas, Santa Lucia, Calabozo, with others of minor importance, took up arms against the government, imagining that the President had fallen a victim to this treacherous plot, and showing clearly that the whole affair had been regularly combined and organized. Had any one in Venezuela before doubted the popularity of Monagas, he would at once have been undeceived, for the whole population of Caracas spontaneously rushed to

his defence. Addresses of congratulation from all the provinces were also sent to the government house.

In the month of July, 1849, Paez resolved on again trying his fortune on the soil of Venezuela. He landed at Coro, where his adherents raised about 1,200 men, surprised the authorities and took the town, and then advanced into the interior of the country, spreading desolation wherever he passed. The country people fled at his approach, till at last they assembled in numbers, arming themselves as they could, and together with the militia surrounded him in a place called Campo Monagas, where, finding his position desperate, he surrendered at discretion, throwing himself upon the clemency of the government.* Paez was taken to Caracas, where the President, with the consent of the Council of Government—the Congress not being then in session—instead of handing him over to the regular tribunals to be tried for treason, granted him an amnesty; but for the security and tranquillity of the Republic, exiled him from its territory. In the mean time addresses poured in from the provinces urging the government to allow Paez to be tried by the common tribunals—not as a conspirator merely, but for the excesses, murders, incendiarisms, and rapine alleged to have been committed by him and his followers during his last expedition. The President fearing some outbreak of the people, who, stirred up by all these addresses, might have been led into some excesses fatal to Paez, had him removed from Caracas to the castle of San Antonio in Cumaná, where he remained until the Congress of the Republic passed a decree banishing him for ever from the territory of Venezuela. He proceeded to the island of St. Thomas, and thence found his way to New York by way of Philadelphia.

Among the officers who surrendered at Campo Monagas were many of those who had been taken at San Carlos de Zulia, and liberated on their parole. In most countries such a breach of

* See Appendix B.

faith would have been punished with death; but Monagas, true to the principles which he had adopted on assuming the reins of government, merely exiled the most prominent among them. During the whole of his presidency there has not been a single execution throughout Venezuela for political offences.

The two following papers are extracted from an answer written by Mr. Acevedo in 1849, to some observations which had appeared in a paper called "*El Revisor*," in Curaçoa. They will be read with interest, as they give a succinct review of the career of both Generals Monagas and Paez. From them the people of the United States will be able to form an opinion of the character of the two men who have been so prominent in the affairs of Venezuela.

MONAGAS.

HOWEVER little the editor of the *Revisor* may know of the revolution which secured the independence of Venezuela, he ought to know in what manner, and by what honorable and imperishable titles, the name of General José Tadeo Monagas has been inscribed in the annals of our country. His life considered in every point of view up to the year 1831, is shielded from every species of attack: immaculate patriotism, approved valor, firm and intrepid character, unshakable morality, and important services not only to the cause of liberty and independence, but to that of *order*; such are the principal features in his biography to that period, and for these he deserved to be gradually elevated to the highest rank which he obtained in the militia. From that time until 1847, he held no public office, but lived in retirement, giving examples of morality, laboriousness and probity. In 1831, he for a few months was at the head of an insurrection, and in 1835 of another. Paez also ac-

cuses him of treason in the exercise of his presidential powers. I will take a rapid survey of these charges, in order to enter duly into the discussion.

It is known that there existed a Republic of Colombia, which in 1829 was presided over by the Liberator, Simon Bolivar, that Venezuela commenced a revolution headed by Paez, toward the end of that year and the beginning of 1830, to dis-acknowledge the Liberator, and separate herself from Colombia, and that at the end of the latter year was promulgated the constitution, which was the product of that revolution. A revolution and a constitution are not slight matters, and men like General Monagas, who had labored to found themselves a country, who were really grateful to Bolivar, who had sworn to support Colombia, and who were enchanted with her, are in no way culpable, because they could not at once cast from them all these noble feelings. Venezuela was alarmed at the idea of the establishment of a monarchy, and tore asunder the great Republic, the constituent Assembly consummating the work, by banishing Bolivar. Many men recovered from this first stupor. Bolivar caused his voice to be heard throughout Venezuela, and half the country repented of their levity and the measures which had been taken, and thought of once more submitting to Bolivar. General Monagas refused to take the oaths to the new constitution, and placed himself at the head of the party who opposed it. Was not such conduct highly noble and praiseworthy? Had not Bolivar died, the constitution of Venezuela would indubitably have ceased to exist, for the reaction was tremendous; but he expired while it was being organized, and as soon as General Monagas was convinced of the truth of this fact, he believed that the re-organization of Colombia was impossible, and thought only of the means by which he could honorably withdraw from so critical a position. The *Revisor* says that Paez conquered him, but I cannot comprehend how there could be a conquest where there was no struggle, combat, battle, contention, skirmish, nor anything of

that nature. On the contrary, it is proved that many of the military men who had accompanied him, were of the same opinion with himself, because they submitted in the Valley of La Pascua without a combat, and one of them was the valiant Antonio Belisario, whom Paez has just caused to be killed, so wickedly in Maracaibo, and this Belisario with all the cantons of Chaguaramas were then following General Monagas. The latter, who had entertained no personal or anti-patriotic views in the movement he had made, and who was convinced he could no longer effect the good to which he had aspired, would not allow Venezuelan blood to be shed on his account, and obliged all his companions in arms to submit. Paez pardoned him because he could not, nor ought not to have acted otherwise, and Monagas and all the Republic were convinced of this. What then was condemnable or reproachable in the conduct of General Monagas in all this matter?

And now to 1835. *It was not* General Monagas who caused the insurrection of that year, and it is proved that he adopted it as the only means of saving the Republic, which he believed would otherwise be lost. Maracaibo, Caracas, Valencia, Puerto-Cabello, Cumana and Barcelona, took the initiative in this movement before Aragua where General Monagas resided, and at the end of July 1835, the General was intimately convinced that the great majority of the whole of the Republic had the same feeling. From the same principle and against all that he most loved, he had in the early part of 1830, joined in the revolution of Venezuela against Colombia and the Liberator; and then it was that being undeceived and perceiving his error he remained in arms only three months and some days, the time which was indispensably necessary to persuade himself that the great majority of Venezuela did not desire to change her institutions.

Paez well knows that had General Monagas chosen to continue in arms, it would not have been very easy, and perhaps impossible to overcome him, that much blood would have been

shed, and that the Republic would have suffered incalculable evils ; and he knows also that it was a highly patriotic feeling which determined General Monagas to compel his companions, for the second time, to lay down their arms without a combat.

From that time until 1846, General Monagas continued to lead his usual life of a laborious and pacific citizen, giving to Paez an example of circumspection and obedience, which a man of his character and circumstances ought to observe. In 1846 the Republic was no longer that which Paez had governed so many years, and it was clearly evident that a new epoch was about to commence. They sought the man necessary to the times, and this man, by Paez's own confession, was General Monagas. I remember holding a conference with him at Artiz, in the month of October of that year, at which he said to me, "*Some people are thinking of Salom, but what contingent aid can he bring with him to the Presidency ? Monagas brings his great party in the east, a party whose concurrence it is necessary to obtain, under present circumstances, for the salvation of the Republic.*"

Therefore the error of Paez was not in thinking of Monagas ; because he who has so many reasons for well knowing Venezuela, independently of his ulterior intention, thought that the election of Monagas was a NECESSARY election, and I for my part declare that I so considered it. Had Paez continued thus to think without allowing himself to be led away by the adulation of flatterers and his own ambition, the Republic would have remained tranquil, the presidency of General Monagas would have produced lasting advantages, and a great part of the credit thus obtained would have been apportioned to Paez. The error Paez committed was in believing that because he had been the instrument by which the amnesties of 1831 and 1835 had been granted to Monagas, the latter would have made himself subordinate to him in the presidency. Up to that time he had not received from General Salom even a friendly look,

and there was nothing to authorize him to infer that the said General would be more condescending towards him than General Monagas. I, who believe I know somewhat of the feelings of Paez, had formed an opinion that between Salom and Monagas, Paez would decide for the latter; and in this I was not mistaken. Many were the efforts made by Quintero to wean Paez from this determination; but he could not succeed in doing so, and from no other reason than that which I have just explained. And in fact, in this Paez did not deceive himself: if he had always followed his own instincts he would at this time be in a very different position. Had General Salom succeeded in obtaining the presidency, he would not, as General Monagas did, have shown him such a mark of deference as that of appointing such a ministry as he did at the onset. The Guzman question would have been brought forward, and General Salom would never have consented to become the instrument of his own dishonor by ordering Guzman to be shot, and after that things would have taken the same course as under the presidency of Monagas. All these conjectures are founded on the most solid basis which under the circumstances can be advanced; and I can appeal to the events which have occurred, should any proof of their correctness be deemed necessary.

The charge of treachery against Monagas, is founded by Paez, in the first place, on his not having governed the country with the men and in accordance with the doctrines of the party who had raised him to the presidency; and, secondly, on his being the author of the attack on the Chamber of Representatives, on the 24th of January, 1848. Upon this ground, and in the legal sense which is alone admissible with regard to the first charge, it cannot be said that General Monagas is a traitor because he did not govern with the men and according to the doctrines of that party; but I maintain that neither in the political republican electioneering sense can such a charge be

brought against General Monagas, and that if he did not carry on his government with the men and according to the doctrines of the party who principally decided his election, the fault was that of the party, and not of General Monagas.

I have the conviction that the conduct of the liberal party up to the end of 1846, was the cause that General Monagas, when he ascended the presidential chair, entertained unfavorable impressions towards that party; but notwithstanding, well disposed and prepared to bring about a peace between the parties, and thus give tranquillity to the Republic. He found it ripe for civil war, devoured by fierce hatreds and furious passions, in consternation at the imprisonment and trials of hundreds of its citizens, and afflicted by the sufferings of all the working classes and the critical position of the public treasury; it cannot be supposed that the idea could ever have occurred to him of breaking off with the party which had raised him to power; for, supposing it to be rational, he also supposed it to be just and moderate. But what was his astonishment when he perceived the excited state of their minds, the violent irritation of their passions, the exaggeration of their pretensions, the intolerance of their ideas, the extravagance of their projects! In the liberal party he certainly met with nothing of this nature; the liberal party knew its own position, which ought to be that of *supplicants*, and for that reason mild, gentle, tolerant, and very limited in its pretensions. It mattered little to it whether the oligarchical party continued to govern the country, provided that the candidate it had brought forward for the presidency in opposition to General Monagas, should be saved from death; that the sufferings of those who had compromised themselves in a revolution, of which not the whole party had approved, should be alleviated; and that guarantees should be given to them that they should be considered (as they did in fact,) as composing four-fifths of the Republic. But the directors of the oligarchical party did not think that proceeding in such a man-

ner would be in the least degree fitting. No: they spoke only of the death of Guzman as being necessary to the existence of the Republic; of punishing those who had been implicated in the revolution; of diminishing the right of suffrage; of a species of militia which being exclusively subjected to the command of Paez, should render even the Executive Power subordinate to him. The men were not to be taken from every class, but selected from among those who were the most furious against the liberals; and the latter were to be treated in all and everything with harshness and disdain, and as being capable of every evil action. In a word, the directors of the oligarchical party strove to introduce in legislative and administrative measures, a system of violence, terror and partiality, making the first magistrate of the State an instrument of their passions and their revenge, plunging him into a tortuous career which could conduct him only to ignominy or to despotism. This is a slight sketch of what presented itself to the view of General Monagas during the first three months of his administration.

Such exaggerated and irrational pretensions, caused him in the first instance to vacillate, and as at the same time he was becoming duly informed of the increase and number of the liberal party, and of the justice and moderation of their demands, the conclusion which such a man would come to who desired the welfare of the Republic, was perfectly natural and logical, namely: *to render himself independent of the oligarchical party, and act with justice.* Could they be called doctrines, those which that party wished to pursue? Could the men who formed that party inspire him with confidence?

General Monagas did therefore render himself independent of it, in the first place by ridding himself of the ministry which had been formed entirely to the taste of Paez, and determined to govern thenceforth of himself; but very shortly afterwards, and even before the commutation of Guzman's sentence, he found that those disappointed passions would be directed and with all

their virulence against him ; that those men aspired at nothing less than domineering over the Republic, be it by what means it might, that they would not be satisfied with half measures, that all his political creed was to be reduced to them and to their purposes, and that all he might do, which could be considered in accordance with the sentiments of these frenetics, would produce no other effect than that of weakening the faith and dampening the enthusiasm of the liberal party which could be opposed to them, and induce them to laugh at and deride his blindness and his condescension. He therefore determined on obtaining the support of the men and doctrines of the liberal party, and thus has been explained and justified the whole of the conduct of General Monagas, in 1847. Many, many are the facts which might be cited in proof of what I have here stated, but should this be required of me, I would appeal only to the columns of "*La Prensa*" and "*El Espectador*," which were the periodicals that served as organs to the oligarchists to color their projects and to unite their party.

They from the first moment spoke only of the treason of the President, of the necessity for his accusation and deposition, of the organization of their party into a faction with a man at its head whom they would erect into a *principle*, and of the possibility of doing all they might think fit, calculating, as they did calculate, on positive majorities in both chambers. Many of the principal movers who thus spoke out and plotted, were Members of Congress, and they were so bitter in their expressions, so exaggerated in their ideas, so confident in their chief, that it was impossible not to be convinced from their whole conduct that they were resolved to act as a faction which only desired to find a pretext, be it what it might, for Paez to take up arms. Could the President, could the nation, view such conduct in any other light than as that of a *faction*? And could the President fail to adopt such measures as those within his power, that they might see, should they continue in this course, the impossibility of carrying their projects into effect?

The President of the Republic could not, without disgrace to his own reputation, and without degrading the power which the nation had confided to him, submit to the conditions which a party that had so conducted itself, insisted on dictating to him ; this, indeed, would have been treason, and in the very fact a real change in the institutions, which from that moment would have ceased to exist, substituting for them the will of a few men with a military chief at their head ; and to nothing less did they aspire. This is the truth in all its purity ; the nation saw it, even the dullest comprehended it, and now they come to us with their stupidities, insisting that the Representatives had the right to judge the President, and that it was a *crime* to prevent them doing whatever they might please to do. The Representatives who wish to enjoy such a right, and to use it as the constitution has ordained and the nation desires, the Representatives who would not see such acts as that of the 24th of January, begin by saying to themselves, that they do not represent a party, much less the passions and exaggerations of such a party ; they are the first to call to order those who have anti-constitutional pretences, and never declare themselves the personal enemies of the President, nor organize themselves into a faction, uniting with a military chief to realize his plans. The members of this faction remember no other action than that of the 24th of January, and forget all that preceded it and co-existed with it. If the leaders of the party who organized the plans which were defeated by the 24th of January, had known what it is to govern, to legislate, and duly exercise the elevated functions of representatives of the people, they never would have consented to allow the press, the opinions they themselves uttered and the policy they attempted to inculcate, to have taken so virulent, insulting, vulgar, immoderately partial and factious a direction as was observed in almost all their actions, writings and conversations of the year 1847 ; for they ought to have remembered that such proceedings

had been reviled by them during the preceding sixteen years, and that they were irremediably conducive to civil war, that no party capable of governing upon principle either could or ought to give such a direction to its policy ; for, as *El Revisor* says, *It is natural that tow should burn when fire is thrown into the midst of it.* This fact reveals with the clearness of the mid-day sun, that the said leaders wished for war as the last resource which they could efficaciously employ to recover their lost power, calculating on the prestige and qualities they supposed their chief to possess, and on the abuse which they intended to make of the rights conferred on representatives by the constitution. The leaders and many of the second order said publicly, that what was most necessary to them was some means of placing arms in the hands of Paez, that to attain this end all means were good, and that the decision once left to the fate of war their triumph was certain and indubitable, for the people of Venezuela *could be driven with whips.* They could not have found a pretext more to their taste for declaring such a war, than the event of the 24th of January ; and what has been the result to them ? Will they deny that the President might have placed fifty thousand men under arms, if he had had sufficient arms, and had believed it to be necessary ? When was it ever seen in Venezuela, that thousands of men presented themselves to go forth to combat, as was the case after the 24th of January ? And does not all this reveal the conviction which the people felt of the reality of the liberticidal plans of the oligarchists against the President and the constitution ? Why, then, should they be astounded at the event of the 24th of January and all that followed it ? Did they not ask for war ?

Clearly, most clearly could it be foreseen from the month of May, 1847, what must necessarily occur in 1848 ; and the 24th of January was nothing more than one of a hundred means of outbreak which must ensue between the parties, and assuredly

they could not have found a more suitable one ; and yet it has been said, and repeated in a thousand different ways, *that the deed of the 24th of January was not that of the people of Caracas, but of the reserved militia, armed and commanded by the President, who had previously disarmed the active militia.* Let us examine this.

Much importance has been given by Paez and his party to this fact of disarming the active militia, which they say was composed of the better class of society, of men of the greatest morality and education, who had more to lose, &c. &c., but they do not say of this militia that there were not in the whole of the Republic, and this in the capitals of provinces and some few cantons, more than five thousand men, the major part incapable of serving in the field ; that two-thirds of this militia composed the real and only oligarchist party, and that it was the most palpable testimony which could be given that society was divided into a dominant and a subjected class ; they do not remember that some of the active militia were the principal agents of the plots against the government, of the provocation to war, and they do not deduce from this that to leave them armed would have been rendering the war much more sanguinary and disastrous. This party who wished to lead matters to arbitrariness, by means of war, ought to have foreseen, that the Government which defended the institutions against whoever might attack them, would not leave arms in their hands in order that the struggle might be so much the more deadly.

The President therefore disarmed them, but only *in part*, for many of them did not deliver up their muskets, he did this not to sacrifice them, but only to render them obedient ; he disarmed them for the same reason that you would deprive a child or a mad person of a poniard, a razor, or a pistol ; and if the active militia found themselves without Government arms on the 24th of January, it was from their own fault, it was for

the welfare of the capital, it was to see whether the conspirators would desist from their liberticidal plans. These militia-men composed but a minute portion (about five hundred) of the population, and a government, above all a republican one, relies only on the majority. Therefore, the charge brought against the President is of no weight in this respect.

By the militia law every Venezuelan between the age of nineteen and forty-one years is liable to be enlisted, and as the qualifications required for an active militia-man are rare; it is indubitable that the reserve militia is composed of what may be properly called the people, (artisans, workmen, agriculturists,) and it is known that in Caracas there are more than five thousand of the latter militia. In consequence of the Chamber having decreed that it should have a guard, thereby committing a serious abuse of its power, about three hundred men assembled in the edifice, in which the Congress held its sittings, completely armed, and no government in the world could have viewed such an assemblage otherwise than as an armed faction ready to strike a blow. Notwithstanding this General Monagas and the administration on that night (23d January) avoided coming to a rupture; however, they desired, and it was their duty to desire it, that the Government should appear prepared and capable of preventing any attack whatsoever, and it was with this motive that the Governor called into service a small portion of the militia of the capital; those from Petare and other places in the immediate vicinity came in spontaneously, on receiving the alarming news of what had happened on the night of the 23d. If the leaders of the insurgents had not been so blind and so much implicated, they would have perfectly understood from the appearance of the streets, and the expression of the features of the people, that the general feeling condemned their criminal attempts; but I have already said that all they were seeking for was an open rupture, and far from being forewarned by what they saw, they only panted for the moment of attack. If such were the

thoughts of men who called themselves intelligent, and said they had something to lose, and were the *elite* of society, what must those have thought who were insulted by being accused of being deficient in these qualifications ! And then why accuse the President as being the author of the feelings and actions of the people ? The fact is, that with the exception of the houses of the oligarchists, there was not one in Caracas, or the environs, the inhabitants of which did not desire the total destruction of the men who had placed the community in such a state. In the park there were not muskets enough for even a third part of the people who assembled in the neighborhood of the church of San Francisco, all armed with every description of weapons, their own property ; and *if* it be certain that the first attack made upon the guard of the Chamber was by a company armed with muskets, and a group of the people, it is so likewise that more than three thousand men, who were not at that time formed into companies, nor had they muskets, hastened to support their companions ; and that the companies who were regularly armed were occupied in restraining the general irritation of the people and in saving those very conspiring representatives ; the small number of deaths which ensued can only be explained in this way. General Monagas observed the lowering of the storm, and he believed that the best mode of averting it, or of rendering it less destructive, was to organize the reserved militia and to keep it ready to act and in good subordination ; I also thought so, and the result has proved it. But these men have pretended that the militia should have fired upon the people and that it was the duty of the President to have died defending the representatives ! Facetious fools ! they had been provoking the people to open war, had wished to shoot the President, and then they attribute the fury of the people to the President, and they demand that the latter should go forth and fire upon the people, get himself killed and endanger all society to save them from the peril which they themselves had sought ! Facetious

fools ! In what country in the world could things have been combined as they had been in this instance by the oligarchists without producing precisely the same results ? Has not the *Revisor* told us *that tow will burn when fire is thrown into the midst of it* ? Men only who could have been blind enough not to see that they were provoking one-tenth of the population to combat with the other nine-tenths, and who could conceive that such a war was the best that could be undertaken for the welfare of the country, only such men, I say, could have doubted that they were bringing on themselves the whole mass of the people from the very moment that they commenced their liberticidal operations ; and then, to vent their impotent rage, they attribute to the President that which they had themselves provoked, or it may be said, actually organized. The President's only exertion was to moderate the ardor of the people, to inspire them with confidence in themselves, and in the measures of the administration, that they might not give loose to their exasperation, that they might listen to him, and in their turn confide in the President ; there was no need for organizing, for commanding, nor for preparing any thing against the Congress. Some representatives knew that they were in deadly combat with the entire, compact, and alarmed mass of the population, and they made a boast of despising them ; the moment of the struggle was sure to arrive, this they knew also, and desired it ; and the worst step which the President could have taken would have been to have rushed forward to restrain by force or violence the popular torrent. Unhappy Venezuela, had such an event occurred ! The fact that a company, armed with muskets, was the first to come to blows with the Guard of the Chambers, does not prove that it was commanded, or in any way instigated by the President so to do. If this company had not done it, any of those who had been called out to guarantee society from anarchy, and against the criminal attempts of the faction, would have effected it. That company acted as any other, as the entire mass of the population, guided

by its own instincts, and for its own security, would have done. To such a pass had the leaders of the oligarchists conducted matters. And with what reason do they now come forward to bring charges against the President? Let them bring them against themselves, and bear the penalty of their madness and their blind passions.

To sum up what is herein stated, it has been proved to demonstration to every man who is capable of reflection, that the President took no aggressive part in the event of the 24th of January, and for the following reasons : first, the facts would of themselves indicate that had the President taken any part in the attack upon the Congress, it would have been for the purpose of intimidating it, since he himself and his friends saved the lives of many of the representatives, and even those of the most bloodthirsty personal enemies of the President ; moreover, this same effect would have been produced by his merely allowing, on the night of the 23d, the ejection by force of the armed men who had assembled in the chambers of the Congress ; the act would have been legal, perfectly legal, the Congress would not have appeared to have been attacked, and it would nevertheless have been intimidated ; but as the President had no design either to attack or to intimidate, he that night restrained the ardor of the people, thus fulfilling what he considered to be his duty : but unfortunately the very fact of his having succeeded on that night, demonstrated to the people that they would be compelled to disobey the President if they wished to prevent the conspirators from carrying their projects into effect, which projects were not solely directed against the President, but principally against the people and liberal institutions ; secondly, it is a certain fact that the idea of re-assembling the Congress on the 25th was posterior to the event of the 24th ; therefore the administration had no plan of attack against the Congress, because it is not to be conceived how it could have organized an attack to dissolve it, without having calculat-

ed what would have to be done subsequently; thirdly, if there had been any plan, the getting rid of the personal enemies of the President would doubtless have formed part of it, and yet they were precisely these very persons whom he and his friends saved; fourthly and lastly, why impute to the President a feeling which these very oligarchists confess was imbued in the souls of the whole mass of the people? Merely because many of those who assisted in the attack had muskets. And had not the House of Representatives its own guard amounting to about three hundred men, all armed in absolute violation of the law? and did not this same guard fire on the people and kill two citizens? and was it not clearly ascertained that the House of Representatives had been converted into a regular magazine of arms?

PAEZ.

EVERY time that the idea of Paez, and of his rebellion, rises to my recollection, my spirit suffers an inexpressible grief; for from the year 1831, I was the sincere friend of that man, notwithstanding his defects—I long considered him a monument of civic glory to my country, and had hoped that his name would have passed down to posterity as that of the founder of civil liberty in Venezuela. Sometimes I had to suffer for what I had ventured to write to him, telling him that which I believed to be the truth under various circumstances; but of this I never repented, for he, being animated by patriotic spirit, knew how to give to my words the real meaning they contained; frank, though perhaps not agreeable, but still friendly and patriotic. But unfortunately, a man of violent character succeeded in acquiring so paramount an influence over the mind of Paez, that he became deaf to every species of argument, and incapable of pro-

moting any other ideas than those which were in perfect accordance with the views of his Mentor. The rebellion of Paez against the Republic which he had aided to create, against the institutions he had aided to establish, has torn asunder the tie which bound us to each other; and his proclamations and publications in defence of his own conduct, and against the President of the Republic and the administration of which I formed a part, authorize me to consider him as the most terrible public enemy that Venezuela has yet had, and to treat him without any sort of consideration. With painful feelings, therefore, but thereunto constrained by one of the most sacred duties which a public man can have to fulfill, I am about to expose, as far as in me lies, his criminal tendencies: my country alone will be the gainer in so painful a contention, but that suffices.

I know that there exist several historical relations written by highly respectable persons, in which will, at some period, be published the truth with regard to the history of Paez from the year 1815 to 1821. They are so characteristic that they will indubitably meet credence with posterity with regard to many atrocious and in every way unjustifiable acts, of which he had long been silently accused, but which within the few last years have been published by the press. I shall abstain from offering any opinion upon them. He well knew the opinion which had been formed of him, but believing himself to be a man absolutely necessary to the country, he constituted himself that haughty and overbearing chief, who did whatever he thought fit in Venezuela from 1821 to 1829. A thorough soldier, though an ignorant and spoiled child of fortune, he was feared by all honest and peaceable citizens; and anecdotes of his scandalously licentious conduct, and his tyrannical domination, may be referred to by dozens. Men of profligate character and capable of every sort of crime, were the chosen friends of Paez; while men of letters, of education and of good morals, if he did not keep at a distance from them, he looked upon with mistrust and ridicule, when he did not compel them to

suffer his disdain and sometimes harsher treatment. I shall during my whole life remember a meeting which I had, with one of the most respectable members of our society, in the corridors of the University at Caracas on the 27th of November, 1829, the day after the people of that capital had sanctioned the separation of Venezuela from the Republic of Colombia, and the disacknowledgment of the authority of the Liberator. That patriotic man, gifted with extraordinary foresight, who knew that I was a partisan of Bolivar, looked gloomily when he heard that I had taken a part in the revolution, and not being able or not being willing to enter into a discussion with me upon the reasons which I had alleged to justify my conduct, would make me no other reply to all I said to him, and alluding to Bolivar and Paez, but this, "*Be assured, my friend, you are escaping from Scylla to run upon Charybdis.*" Such was the opinion which was formed of Paez at that time by all good men in Venezuela. His whole conduct and his public acts were the foundations for this opinion. His well known ignorance, even as to the simplest ideas necessary to direct the conduct of a public man, was not solely what might have been objected to in him, but his unwillingness to subject himself to all civil or moral rules, and his evident tendency to organize a military oligarchy, so much the more tyrannical, because merit was no consideration in the selection of the men who were destined to oppress the country. If the correctness of this sketch of his character be denied I will refer to the inextinguishable records of his acts during that period, and I am certain of confounding any one who should attempt to contradict me. Many times has the charge been brought against him, that he was the cause of the destruction of Colombia, by his abominable and unjustifiable military revolution of the 30th of April, 1826, but I would not bring such a charge against him, (because, in my opinion, Venezuela could never have been happy under that mode of government,)

excepting to make him morally responsible for the tendency to revolutions, which since that time has been observed among us, and from the example given by Paez on that occasion ; had he given that of obedience to the government, Venezuela would probably this day have been tranquil and happy, having in the mean time succeeded in obtaining a better system of government by the legal means so clearly pointed out by the Constitution of Cucutá. The example of the revolution of 1826 was most direful, and it is, perhaps, the real origin of all our evils.

Notwithstanding all this, Venezuela confided her destiny to Paez when she separated from Colombia ; but she was not guided by the same feeling which induced the American Congress on the 15th of June, 1775, to nominate Washington to direct the fate of the Union. The reasons which induced Venezuela to confide in him were the same which had led the Liberator to flatter Paez as he had flattered him, and they are, in brief, the following : First : a revolution which might bring about a war required a chief, and the one who could assemble round him the most material elements for this purpose was Paez. Secondly : the greater portion of the military then in Venezuela had been accustomed not to acknowledge any other rule of conduct than the will of Paez, and it was necessary that he should take the charge of bringing those men back to order whom he had himself taught to live in disorder. Thirdly : the question was to insure the success of the revolution, and all those who knew the character and tendencies of Paez, very logically deduced that if Paez were not intrusted with the direction of the revolution, the lightest treachery he could commit would be to deliver up all the leaders in it to General Bolivar, against whom it was directed.* Fourthly : supposing even that the Liberator would

* It is publicly known that there is an officer of high rank in the militia now in Venezuela, who received from Paez the commission to go to Bolivar and offer to deliver up the Republic to him ; and that when this officer arrived in Curaçoa he there received the news of the Liberator's death. History will clearly demonstrate this fact.

have allowed Venezuela to remain in peace, and had no desire to interfere in its organization, every Venezuelan felt assured that Paez would not submit to any other chief, nor to any authority, and that if with him at their head they could not succeed in forming a civil organization, with no other could it be attempted without exposing us to a sanguinary civil war, which might lead by its results to a military despotism ; in a word, it was a physical impossibility to think of confiding the revolution of Venezuela to any other person without endangering its ultimate success ; and as, on the other side, the principal leaders in it felt assured in their own minds that when the time should arrive they could compel the chief to act according to their will, they did not hesitate to elect him.

And what had been feared did actually take place. The constituent assembly being installed, with one hand offered its support to Paez, that he might continue to direct the fate of Venezuela ; but with the other it was compelled to keep on him a tight rein, to make Paez remain in the path which Venezuela required that he should follow. Fortunately there were three potent reasons for his not becoming unmanageable. The first, the character of the majority of the Congress and its influence in the Republic ; the second, the existence of Bolivar and his party ; and the third, his hope that he should continue in command. But for this conjunction of circumstances, it is evident to all who know the history of the constituent assembly and who then knew Paez, that it could not be affirmed that he would have supported the deliberations of that body. If there was some patriotism in his conduct at that period, it is certain that fear and hope were the prominent springs which operated upon his mind. Notwithstanding this, I will not despoil him of the merit which he then and has since acquired, however interested may have been his motives. But I feel authorized to say, casting a glance over the whole of his conduct, that he inwardly resolved as a condition of the sacrifice he made, *that his will was always to weigh in the scales of gov-*

ernment as much as he might consider proper to make it weigh ; and this sole truth, which it may be said is now an historical fact sufficiently well proved, the world will say annuls and destroys the glory or honor by which those services were to be repaid, and which he has in fact cancelled by the miseries he has heaped upon the country.

I will in this place repeat what I said in my short answer to the MANIFESTO OF PAEZ, because I am resolved on sustaining all that is asserted in it. That is to say : " that Paez having been the real cause of the destruction of Colombia, he did not willingly enter into the path of civil order which Venezuela had traced out for herself in 1830. He did not rise up against the constituent assembly, because by doing so he would have been a lost man. Quintero himself knows this, and he knows also what it cost in March 1831 to oblige him to go out to take the command of the army on that occasion, because he pretended that the privileges of the military should be restored. His anti-constitutional communications still exist, and many men are still existing, who with Quintero proposed to enter into a federal union with Colombia in order to restrain Paez, and it was on seeing such measures about to be taken that Paez submitted. It is also well known throughout Venezuela what was the conduct of Paez with regard to the President of the Republic, Doctor Jose Vargas, in 1835 and 1836. We know that this virtuous man has written historical notes on the times of his Presidency, and in them it will appear that Paez in a thousand tortuous ways, showed himself to be a disloyal soldier who sought only his own glory at the cost of the republic and of the man whom he had called his friend. Dr. Vargas was obliged to renounce the Presidency, and his adopting that resolution may chiefly be attributed to the manner in which Paez conducted himself towards him. Even Soubllette, during the two terms in which he exercised the Executive Power, had to suffer from the conduct of Paez, although he did nothing without consult-

ing him. If the friends of Soublette would but tell the truth, they would say how much he bewailed being President, subjected thus to Paez. These are truths with the details of which every one is not acquainted, but which history will reveal with all their disgraceful particulars, and this at no very distant date. In the meanwhile, they will serve to strip off the hypocritical mask from the man who has pretended to domineer over the whole of the Presidents of Venezuela, and because he could not succeed in doing so with Monagas, organized a faction to overthrow him, implicating in his crime many Representatives, and thus affording the public scandal of a chamber of conspirators. Paez, therefore, is the real cause of the death of several Representatives, and their blood will cover him with opprobrium instead of justifying his rebellion.

THE following article is extracted from a late Caracas paper, and as it is on a subject which has given rise to much misrepresentation we think it right to lay it before the public of the United States.

A great deal has been said as to the tendency of military men in Venezuela to establish a military government. It is not, however just, after they have given proofs of so many virtues and of such submission to the legitimate Government that tendencies should be imputed to them so utterly at variance with the principles they profess.

Is it requisite to offer a practical and incontestable argument against this loudly trumpeted military propensity, and which it has been falsely said is cherished by our old epaulettes? Well then we will do so. In 1830 the Republic was declared to be in assembly, a respectable portion of the army was under arms, the Liberator was shining resplendently in front of troops inured to war and who had frequently been conquerors; a military government was at that time necessary to a certain extent and nothing could have been more easy than to have established it. And what was the result? That these same military men wishing for a more permanent state of things, labored to obtain a

popular and liberal compact, decreed the disarming of the troops, gave up their privileges, and with satisfaction returned once more to mingle with the people whom they had liberated. Fourteen of our old soldiers with their own hands signed the constitution of the State, and the remainder subsequently defended it with their blood.

In 1840 the present chief of the Republic called the citizens to arms ; the people flew to seize them, and twenty thousand citizens at once lent their aid to the army. Circumstances had then assumed a solemn aspect and no man in Venezuela had ever yet attained the prestige which accompanied General Jose Tadeo Monagas. A single word from him at that moment would have sufficed to establish the military system ; and yet, what was the result ? That this same President General unceasingly exhorted his troops to show obedience to the laws and respect to the constituted authorities ; and after having saved our institutions and re-established the sovereignty of the popular will, the army was disbanded and that without even paying the soldiers the arrears that were due to them.

Where then is this military mania with which our faithful defenders are calumniated when in every circumstance they have given efficacious proof of their love of constitutional order and of republican principles ? Where then exists this *military spirit*, this spirit of terrorism and oppression, when all the power that exists among us is in the laws and all our strength is vested in the popular will ?

But to conclude ; this military spirit is a ridiculous invention malignantly forged for the purpose of alienating men's minds from each other and engendering discord between those who should always be united and compact ; it is an infamous idea of the opposition by which they attempt to render unpopular the administration of the patriotic General Monagas ; it is in short a mine which is to be worked beyond the limits of the Republic, seeking in another zone that which in this cannot be found.

Our brave military men have been calumniated ; but, we can repeat in the words of our President in his message,* "such an atrocious calumny originates only with those who are seeking to attain objects beyond their strength or their deserts, or with men who with depraved designs attempt to throw society into disorder."

* See answer to the President's Message, Appendix C.

APPENDIX A.

THE CONGRESS TO THE NATION.

VENEZUELANA:

THE Congress being convinced of the necessity of preserving peace recommended it to the people in its address of the 27th of January. The Congress then expressed the feeling of the national opinion, and this was aided and sustained by its will.

But some ambitious men, without authority and illegally concealing the origin and the truth of facts, falsely pretended to be the supporters of a Constitution which you love, that they might elevate themselves to the position of arbiters of the fate of the Republic. Deaf to every feeling of patriotism, they rushed into a rebellion, confiding more in the *prestige* of a man than in the will of the people and the power of its institutions. These insensate men, from whom the nation had withdrawn its confidence, preferred, rather than lose their power, the ruin and desolation of their country.

The people saved their laws: saved their guarantees. One simultaneous and universal shout of "The Constitution and Liberty" resounded throughout the whole of the Republic, and the people spontaneously rushed to arms to sustain and defend their Government. The power of the national opinion displayed itself in the most splendid manner. As soon as armies were thus improvised to put down the refractory, the chiefs of the demoralized faction could scarcely manage to unite, and this by deceit and force, a few followers, and these quickly abandoned them.

The chief of this faction, the centre of this party, the first who dared to spill the blood of Venezuelans, received condign punishment in the field of "Los ARAOUATOS" from the hands of those who in other days were witnesses to or companions of his glory, when he defended the cause of the people. The valiant Sons of Apure, commanded by the intrepid General JOSE CORNELIO MUNOZ, on the 10th of March defeat-

ed the proud general, who, to his passion for command, had sacrificed his honor and his country.

Liberty, which was attempted to be destroyed in this age of democracy and in an American country, triumphed on this glorious day. The brave General Muñoz and his worthy companions in arms have served their country with the feeling of true citizens and the valor of heroes. The nation owes to them a vote of thanks, and in its name the Congress awards it to them.

Venezuelans! this fratricidal war will soon be terminated, and Venezuela will once more testify that there is no power which can overcome institutions supported by the opinion of the majority of a nation. All that remains to do is that you should be worthy of the triumph, sacrificing the injuries you have received on the altar of public welfare. Love of our institutions, respect to the legal authorities, tolerance and fraternity, will insure to us for ever the precious gifts of peace and liberty, the sure basis of welfare and national prosperity.

CARACAS, 3d April, 1848.

(Signed,) E. A. HURTADO, President of the Senate.

F. OLAVARRIA, President of the Chamber of Representatives.

J. A. FREYRE, Secretary of the Senate.

J. A. PEREZ, Secretary of the Chamber of Representatives.

APPENDIX B.

OFFICIAL BULLETIN. NO. 101.

TERMINATION OF THE WAR.

Republic of Venezuela. Head Quarters in Vallesito, 14th Aug., 1849.

To the General Commander-in-chief of the Army of Operations in this Province:

WHEN I arrived on the 11th of this month at Las Albahacas, I was informed that you were in advance of me with troops to oppose me, and I resolved on writing to you to induce you to

terminate the present war by pacific means : but before I could close my communication, I was attacked, and had to defend myself.

I still entertain the same feelings which I did on the 11th ; feelings which I have put in practice all my life, both as a General in campaign and as President of the Republic. It is my desire that the present contest should terminate without augmenting the misfortunes which the country deplores, and I think that this great object can be attained by your accepting the method which I have the honor to propose to you through Captain José de Jesus Villasmil.

I send a duplicate of this dispatch by another channel, that there may be no delay in its arriving at your head-quarters.

I am your obedient servant,
JOSÉ ANTONIO PAEZ.

Republic of Venezuela. Office of the Commander-in-chief of Operations in Carabobo.

Head Quarters in Macapo-abajo, 14th Aug., 1849.

To the General, Secretary of State in the War and Marine Departments :

SIR—It is now 12 o'clock, and I have just received from Señor José Antonio Paez a communication which I enclose, and to which I replied in the following terms :

"Head Quarters in Macapo, 14th Aug., 1849.

"SEÑOR JOSÉ ANTONIO PAEZ :

"At noon this day I received the note from you dated this morning in Vallesito, and which was delivered into my hands by Señor José Jesus de Villasmil, your Commissioner, and I have also heard what the said gentleman had to say, and in answer thereto I have the honor to tell you that I have no orders from the government to treat ; but for the sake of peace and to end the war that now desolates our beautiful country, I agree, as far as regards myself, and lies within the scope of my faculties, to insure the lives of all those who shall surrender at discretion. The government is merciful, and will always act in accordance with the laws."

All which I impart to you for the information of His Excellency, the Executive Power.

I am your obedient servant,
(Signed) JOSÉ L. SILVA.

Republic of Venezuela. Office of the Commander-in-chief of Operations in Carobobo.

Head Quarters in Monagas, 15th of August, 1849.

SIR—I have the honor to enclose the list of the chiefs who at six o'clock this evening surrendered to the clemency of the government. It has fallen to my lot to have the honor on this occasion to represent the government forces.

I shall hereafter transmit to you the list of officers and troops who have not yet reached the camp: as regards the artillery and other munitions of war, I will send you a note of them as soon as I can get it; at present I have not time.

JOSÉ L. SILVA.

List of Chiefs (Superior Officers) who surrendered to the clemency of the Government in the field of battle called Monagas.

Generals.

JOSÉ ANTONIO PAEZ,
LEON FEBRES CORDERA, DOMINGO HERNANDEZ.

Colonels.

JOSÉ ESCOLASTICO ANDRADE, DOLORES HERNANDEZ,
ALEJANDRO BLANCO, FRANCISCO HERNAIZ,
CARLOS MINCHIN, JOSÉ CELIS,
JOAQUIN MARIA CHACIN.

First Commandants.

MANUEL ANTONIO PAEZ, EUGENIO MENDOZA,
JUAN ANTONIO IZQUIERDO, MANUEL MARIA MARTIN,
MARIANO USTARIZ, PENTALEON RODRIGUEZ.

Second Commandants.

WENCESLAO BRICEÑO, JUAN BETANCOURT,
LEOPOLDO TELLERIA, JOSÉ JUAN EMAZABE,

RAMON FRANCIA.

Vicar General.—JOSÉ AYALA.

Surgeon in Chief.—DR. VICENTE LINARES.

Commissary of War.—FERMIN GARCIA.

War Auditor.—DR. ANGEL QUINTERO.

A true copy Field of Monagas, 15th August, 1849.

(Signed) SILVA.

APPENDIX C.

ANSWER

To the Message of the President of the Republic from the Chamber of Representatives.

EXCELLENT SIR :

The Chamber of Representatives also offers its thanks to Heaven for having preserved the life of your Excellency from the poniard of the assassin. It offers them also with all the effusion of its gratitude, because it has deigned to grant to Venezuela the most precious gift its liberal hand could bestow, *peace and general tranquility.*

Treachery being encouraged by the internal discord of men's minds, which some ill-advised men promoted, led on to treason and disorder; and the flames of war rapidly burst forth, devouring the best hopes of the country; and yet, neither the life of your Excellency, nor the liberty of our people could be destroyed. Providence had decreed that both should be preserved and both were saved; the insensate enemies of the State thus being once more disappointed. This sanguinary civil dissension being terminated, your Excellency, by displaying your magnanimity, has raised the national glory, making Venezuela appear as she is, great and generous.

Venezuela will perpetuate her felicity, "after having passed through all the trials, which were to be feared amid so many contending interests, so much alarm in the minds of men, so much anxiety lest the edifice of her public guarantees should be destroyed," a future full of peace and happiness and concord awaits her. Vain and impotent will be the endeavors of disorganizers, who artfully encouraging injurious rivalties, sowing the seeds of hatred, and even of sedition; the people know full well that discord is the rock on which the most liberal and the best of institutions are endangered, and that union on the contrary, stimulating the growth of patriotic virtues, insures liberty, consolidates peace, gives stable guarantees to industry, and opens a wide field to the welfare of the whole of the community.

With abundant reason does the Chamber lament that a few ill-advised Venezuelans have undertaken to impute to our faith-

ful and intrepid soldiers tendencies which are in opposition with true republican principles. This is doubtless unjust, that in reward for their sacrifices and virtues these men should be calumniated, who have given so many proofs of submission to the legitimate government, and have evinced such love for the laws, and to constitutional institutions.

The Chamber of Representatives, animated by a real desire to promote the welfare of the people by means of just and beneficent laws, relies, from this moment, on the firm support of your Excellency to carry out this work, which is at once one of earnest will as of duty, hoping that there will henceforward exist between the legislative and executive powers that great union of national thought manifested in the due ordering of matters for the true interests of civilization, of liberty and the progress of the people, for the salutary tendencies of peace, the regular and tranquil development of regenerative ideas, and in the alliance of sound principles, the only ones that can lead society to fulfill the high destiny for which it was established.

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